

Elementary English



ORGAN OF THE

NATIONAL

COUNCIL

OF

TEACHERS

OF

ENGLISH



**PICTURE BOOKS FOR CHILDREN
IMPROVING CHILDREN'S READING
DISCOVERING AMERICAN FOLKLORE
READING INDIAN STORIES**



From *People of The Snow* by Wanda Tolboom (Coward-McCann).

**FEBRUARY,
1957**

Elementary ENGLISH

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FEBRUARY, 1957

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By Way of Introduction . . .

The article by WILLIAM R. SCOTT on picture books is the first we have presented by a publisher-editor of children's books. The William R. Scott publications are well-known for the high quality of both their content and format. Mr. Scott, who founded his firm in 1938, usually includes one educator among the editors who pass on his publications. Nearly all the books are first tried out on the children.

HELEN RAND MILLER was formerly a teacher of English at Evanston Township (Illinois) High School, one of the editors of the widely used *Let's Read!* series, and an old-time friend of the Council. Her article in this issue recalls the sparkling quality of the writing she has done before for Council publications.

Folklore is a much-neglected source of delightful experiences for children in elementary schools. In her account of the "story project," AGNES CLARE GROGAN shows how teachers and librarians may kindle children's interests in reading by drawing on the rich resources of American folklore.

We have just complaints about the offerings of television for children, but this medium can be an ally too. Our Mr. Jenkins and Mr. Hazard each month call attention in specific terms to its potentialities. This month we are privileged to present the excellent article by Dr. HELEN HUUS on the use of a TV program in opening new areas of interest in reading. It was originally given as a paper before the National Council of Teachers of English in St. Louis, November, 1956.

The last time ETHEL NEWELL called on us (in December, 1954), she wrote about the passing of the Indian stereotype. Unfortunately it has not passed in the radio and TV Westerns, but a growing literature for children is presenting a serious, sympathetic portrait of the original Americans. In her beautifully written article in this issue Mrs. Newell helps teachers to see the challenge and the possibility of communicating to children the fine qualities the Indians share with people of all races as well as their unique contributions to human culture.

REXFORD W. BOLLING makes a timely plea for action research by teachers. Mr. Bolling, a doctoral candidate at the University of Southern California, has been an elementary school teacher in New York State, a psychologist in a mental hospital and a prison, a guidance director, an assistant professor of psychology, and director of a reading clinic. He is currently Reading Consultant for the Chula Vista, California, City Schools.

RUSSELL F. SCHLEICHER, who suggests so many fine ideas about the utilization of hobbies in the classroom, should know about children. He has three of his own—aged seven, fourteen, and nineteen. Mr. Schleicher was formerly a teacher in the Campus Laboratory School at Bloomsburg, Pennsylvania.

Interest in the subject of spelling instruction continues strong. Miss CELIA HOPKINS cites some sound general principles, and describes a specific program, along with a report of results.

The debate over the place of phonics in reading instruction will probably continue a long time. This month we publish an interesting correspondence about a reading program which makes use of phonics instruction in the initial stages of reading, although the approach in the program as a whole is by no means exclusively phonetic. A progress report about this program, carried on in the schools of Champaign, Illinois during recent years, was published in 1955. Dr. A. STERL ARTLEY makes a critical analysis of this report, and Mrs. ELIZABETH SQUIRES, a member of the Board of Education, replies, at the request of the Superintendent of Schools. Mrs. Squires is a former children's librarian and author of a children's book, *David's Silver Dollar*. She is a member of the Illinois Citizen's Committee on Education. She is the mother of two children in junior high school. Dr. Artley is well-known for his work in the field of reading.

The research report by CLOTILDA WINTER is a sequel to a study reported in this journal in March, 1955. Miss Winter's findings tend to contradict, in some respects, many views commonly held about the interrelationships among the language arts. Comment is invited. Miss Winter has just received her doctor's degree from the University of Texas.

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No. 2

WILLIAM R. SCOTT

Some Notes on Communication in Picture Books

For the last eighteen years picture books and I have been mixed up together in a good many ways. During this time I have written them, rewritten them, worked closely with authors who have written them, designed and planned them, set type for them, worked with artists who illustrated them, struggled with printers and binders who printed and bound them, written promotion copy about them, and finally sold them. I suppose I ought to know better by now, but I'm still fascinated by picture books.

There's magic about a picture book when it begins to come together—when the words suddenly are more than just words on a piece of paper, and the pictures are more than separate pieces of somebody's art. The combination of word and picture together begins to take on a life and movement of its own, and the miracle of communication starts to happen again. I find this process just as exciting every time, even though I have seen it happen well over a hundred times before.

In what follows I have tried to set

down some first-hand notes and observations on a process that may essentially be inexplicable, since the most important part of it concerns feelings and impressions that tend to elude analysis. I am going to start at the youngest end of the spectrum—books for two-year-olds—because these very young books are in many ways the

most demanding and because their apparent simplicity sheds a clarifying light on the mainsprings of communication at any age level. And I would like to make it clear that I am talking about real communica-

tion—not about sales or profits or critical acclaim, but about the effective sharing of significant thoughts and feelings between author, artist, and children through the medium of a printed book.

All cats say, "Meow."

Let's take a very young book that has proved successful with many two-year-olds, *Nothing but Cats*, by Grace Skaar, and see what it communicates to them. Here is the entire text of the book. You must imagine Mr. Scott is founder of Wm. R. Scott, Inc., publishers of children's books.



Very Little Dog

each word image with a big clear picture all by itself on a two-page spread.

Big cats and/little cats and/fat cats and/thin cats and/spotted cats and/tall cats and/short cats./All kinds of cats, and they all say,/"MEOW."

You may well say that it can't be so very hard to write a book with only seventeen different words in it, but from actual experience, these are the hardest books of all to write. About a thousand manuscripts for young children are submitted to us every year, of which at most only four or five are publishable.

At any level of communication the writer has the same basic problems. How can he get his audience "involved" so that they will listen to what he has to say? How much do his readers already know about the subject? How can further information be stated so that his readers can connect



Cats, Cats, Cats

this to what they already know and reach a new understanding? I am inclined to believe that the ability to involve an audience, to make them care so that they will open their minds, is a very rare skill indeed. It requires taking the reader seriously and not patronizing him. Writers must subordinate their own interest in their material to an interest in the reader and an awareness of what meanings and feelings their material can have for him. This need

for a writer to be aware of his audience may sound elementary, but, in practice, astonishingly few writers seem capable of it.

The need for knowing something about the mental furniture in the audience's mind perhaps becomes clearest when one tries to talk to a two-year-old. He probably isn't intrinsically any more stupid (less able to learn) than anyone else is, but he has a much more limited body of experience. Talk to him about the long ago or the far away, and it's much like an astronomer talking to you about the expansion of the universe or the change in the nature of time at very high speed. What we can understand is largely based on our own first-hand experience (the evidence of our five senses and our reaction thereto) plus the ability to comprehend analogies to that experience. Get any adult far enough off his basic experience, and he's in for a rough time.

The same holds for the two-year-old, only his experience base is more limited. Very few writers are willing to limit themselves this drastically. It's *hard*. Try it and see. It doesn't mean that you must talk aimless baby talk. Significant communication is possible, but it must be stated in terms the child can understand—no mean feat for an adult who moves freely in a wider range of experience.

Now let's look into what is being communicated with these seventeen words about cats. The story is about simple, familiar things that a two-year-old knows (cats of different kinds). There is a real sense of suspense, of wanting to know what's coming next. There is a generalization at the end, a satisfactory conclusion that covers all cats (no matter how dif-

ferent they look, they all say the same thing).

Underlying this simple generalization is a basic mathematical concept: you can generalize about similarities but not about differences.

Man moved from the tree to the penthouse largely because he developed the ability to generalize. The human mind is a wonderful thing, but it cannot simultaneously consider an infinite number of things at once. It almost necessarily has to think of one thing at a time. But it can classify, one at a time, the likenesses and unlikenesses in varying data and then produce a generalization about them (All the cats say, "meow.") which *can* be thought about and has some validity in action.

Implicit in sound generalization is the process of discrimination—learning to observe and recognize the difference between superficially similar phenonema—tall cats and thin cats, spotted cats and striped cats, fat cats and thin cats. These basic skills, discrimination and generalization, can be taught and practiced via the printed book at very young ages with apparent pleasure to the child.

And there is considerably more in this deceptively simple book. Most two-year-olds see other people reading and want to "read" for themselves. Here is a book written expressly for *them*. It tells them things that they can understand. After having this book read to them once or twice, they can "read" it for themselves from the pictures. And let no one despise this kind of early independent "reading." Without lecturing or abstract talking, it gives a child the necessary first-hand experience that a book (a sequence of pages

moving from left to right containing pictures and those funny black marks grown-ups call "words") can say something to him that he can understand.

Some other functions of the very young book are so simple and obvious as to be often overlooked entirely. Reading to a child provides an opportunity for sharing a common emotional experience, usually develops into a discussion, tends to convey the feeling that the adult takes reading seriously and, therefore, to condition the child to take it seriously. I believe that many "reading problems" can be traced back to homes where reading is given lip service only.

The drama of growth

Now let us pass onto a slightly more advanced book by the same author, Grace Skaar, *The Very Little Dog*. The complete text follows (a slanting line indicates the end of a double page spread):

Once there was a little dog, a VERY little dog. And when he barked, he barked a little bark—a VERY little bark, like this . . . Bow-wow-wow./Every day the little dog ate all his food and he drank all of his milk, too. And so he grew bigger./Most of the time he was a very good little dog and he played with a stick or he played with his ball. But SOMETIMES he played with OTHER things/[a child's shoe]. And he grew bigger./When he was dirty he had a bath, with lots of soap and lots of water. And he grew still bigger./And once, when no one was watching, he ran in the garden and LOOK WHAT HE DID! [He tore up the flowers]. And still he grew bigger./He took a nap every day, and went to bed early every night. And he grew bigger./When it rained he stayed in his house and kept his feet dry. And he grew bigger./And when it was cold and the wind blew, he wore his warm, red coat. And he grew bigger and BIGGER and BIGGER until he was a . . ./GREAT BIG

DOG./And when the very little dog was a GREAT BIG DOG he didn't bark like this . . . Bow-wow-wow. He barked like this . . . BOW-WOW-WOW-WOW./

This book is mainly concerned with a child's feelings about growing up. It tells him very little factually that he doesn't already know, but it takes for granted his vital interest in the process of growth. Now, growth involves change, and change means exchanging the known and familiar for the unknown and unfamiliar—a process frequently painful and often frightening. Fear of change is probably the basis for the conservatism in us all. Yet life is dynamic, its essence is change, and we all need encouragement in facing change and in mastering our fear of it.

We adults, like all priesthoods, have a way of projecting the idea to children that our own particular ritual is the only true, right ritual for growing up—that only if a child does this and that at such a time will he grow up to be a proper person. Healthy children rebel against this kind of authoritarianism, but, unless they are to be guilt-ridden, they need reassurance that non-conformity is not always as fatal as we conformist adults make out.

Basic attitudes toward living are the deepest part of the heritage that we pass on from generation to generation. Books which are concerned with such basic attitudes are, I believe, important at every age level including the youngest. This book merits attention because it suggests to children that adult-approved rituals, being "good," are not always the only way of growing up. It also suggests that one normally survives a number of failures in the ordinary course of living—a bit of wisdom sadly lacking in our success-oriented culture.

Four-year-old philosophy

One of the most remarkable young books I know is Louise Woodcock's *The Smart Little Boy and His Smart Little Kitten*. The text follows:

Peter was a little boy and he had a smart little kitty./The kitty could do lots of things . . . She could chase her own funny little pointed tail—round and round and round. Peter couldn't do that. Oh, no. He didn't have a tail./The kitty could make her hair stand right out straight when she was frightened. Peter couldn't do that. Oh, no./The kitty could jump from the floor way high up onto the toy cupboard. Peter couldn't do that. Oh, no./The kitty could roll up into a tight little round ball when she went to sleep. Peter couldn't do that. Oh, no. *He wished he could!* BUT . . ./Peter was a smart little boy. He could do lots of things, too. Peter could eat his cereal out of a spoon. The kitty couldn't do that. Oh, no./Peter could put on his overalls all alone, and even buckle up the straps. The kitty couldn't do that. Oh, no./Peter could build a tunnel with his blocks, and make his trains go through it—chug-chug-chug. The kitty couldn't do that. Oh, no./Peter could read a book just like this one. The kitty couldn't do that. Oh, no./But that little kitty DIDN'T EVEN CARE!/
 That last line comes as near to genuine philosophy reduced to a four-year-old's level of understanding as any line I know.

The importance of books addressed to a young child's feelings can scarcely be overstated. While young children have a limited experience, they seem to come equipped with a remarkably well-developed capacity to sense feeling. In fact, as anyone dealing with them discovers, this capacity to understand an adult's feeling has an almost extra-sensory or subconscious quality, it is so acute. Their awareness of their own feelings, however, seems very low. One gets an impression of their swimming in a sea of feeling without any

more awareness of the water than a fish is aware of the water in a stream. Since an important part of maturing is to bring to consciousness some awareness of our feelings, I believe books in this area represent the greatest challenge to authors.

It is not enough, however, to talk *about* feelings. Just as a playwright in order to move his audience must make his characters' feelings come alive on the stage, so a writer must convey feeling through characterization and action in order to make his audience identify and care. There is a vast difference between an outline of *Macbeth* and the play as Shakespeare wrote it. The difference is art, and I am trying to suggest that the same principles of art apply to the picture book, even though the scale of the picture book is miniature.

Another remarkable book is Margaret Wise Brown's *The Runaway Bunny*, which is unfortunately too long to quote here. It has some very interesting things to say about the nature of a mother-child relationship. This certainly is a subject that is of supreme importance to the child, since the nature of this tie to his mother and its growth and change determines the horizons of his entire life.

In this story a simple pattern of action and reaction is used to explore the innermost feelings of a child toward this first significant human relationship. On one hand, the child experiences the security of his mother's unshakable love. On the other hand, it is necessarily a relationship of great dependence for the child, which inevitably generates anger at the mother and a desire to break away. I know of no other book for young children that is more deserving of respect.

A folk tale

Now let us look at a traditional folk tale, *Caps For Sale*, by Esphyr Slobodkina, and see what and how it communicates to children. A bare outline of the story follows:

A cap peddler, who carries his caps on top of his head, takes a nap, resting against a tree. On waking up, he finds that all but his own cap has been stolen. Looking up into the tree, he finds it full of monkeys, each with one of his stolen caps on its head. He shakes his fist at the monkeys, they shake their fists at him. He stamps his foot at them, they mimic him again. In desperation and anger, he takes off his cap and dashes it to the ground. The monkeys, of course, do likewise, and thus inadvertently he recovers his property and the story ends.

Here is a classic folk tale in which a tight "pattern" takes the place of plot. One of its interesting features is that such patterns with their strong repetitions and almost frugal construction are very "secure." They clearly convey to the reader that this is the "perfect" world of fantasy where everything is under control and only those surprises (unknowns) that can successfully be resolved will be introduced. Such patterns, because of their symmetry, also often allow the reader to guess what is going to happen. Suspense (tension) is directed toward not *what* will happen but *how* will it happen. This seems to make a strong appeal to the innate conservatism of children, who, unlike our jaded selves, frequently prefer the same story, over and over again, to unknown new ones.

As we all know, small children have a tremendous need to experience their own parents and significant adults in their lives as infallible, omnipotent, and omniscient, since these people function toward the child as protectors in a threatening world

in which the child is relatively defenseless and powerless. Yet, great as their need for omnipotent protectors undoubtedly is, there is probably an underlying awareness that adults are not infallible. In this story the reader sees and anticipates events long before the somewhat foolish hero does. Children seem to derive an intense (safe since it does not attack *their* adults) satisfaction in the process.

A picture book is not unlike a much condensed one-act play. Each double spread of words and pictures is like a scene in a play, contributing one more significant action to the development. As in a play, the timing and pace of the actions are subtle, but tremendously important, structural ingredients in a good picture book. In determining whether or not the timing is right for its audience, a full-dress tryout with an audience of children is of tremendous help, just as it is with a real play. A tryout will not tell anyone whether a story

is worth telling—children are not very discriminating at best, and it remains the adult's function to decide what he wishes to communicate to them—but it will give valuable indications as to whether or not the story is successful in getting across the footlights to its audience. Folk tales, polished smooth by endless retelling, are often marvels of timing.

The pictures in a picture book are so obviously important that they cannot be ignored. And yet, what can anyone say about art? We feel pictures rather than understand them; they move us; they can often extend the scope of a story, and yet they must be faithful to the author's idea. Pictures speak directly to anyone who sees them, without the complication of letters, or words, or reading.

And there you have the picture book—the simplest, subtlest, most communicative, most elusive, most challenging book form of them all.

HELEN RAND MILLER

Top Flight and Pedestrian Readers

Do you crawl along the lines
In prehistoric times,
Or walk word by word, step by step,
Getting nowhere fast at all?

Why don't you fly in modern times,
And in perspective see the world—
Fly through the pages, find what you want,
Live with books the life of today!

"Now read to yourselves till the bell rings," the teacher said.

She did not tell the boys and girls to use different methods from those they had been using to read aloud. She had never told them how to read to themselves, and neither had anyone else.

Only those who became top-flight

readers found out somehow; no one knows how. You couldn't say they are the brightest ones; they may be the ones who wanted something that is in books and then found ways of getting it.

The others are the pedestrians who read silently just as they read aloud, one word after another. They are threatened with being chronic non-readers, not because of natural stupidity but because at the right time (whenever that was) they didn't discover different reading methods for different purposes. They are in danger

Mrs. Miller is a teacher at Presidio Hill School, San Francisco.

of being like one of their fathers who laboriously became a lawyer—a good one too—but who can't enjoy poetry and novels because he reads everything as he reads his law books, and that is the way the teachers in the lower grades a generation ago taught him to read aloud.

Since at least 99% of all reading is silent, it does seem like letting the children down to teach only oral reading.

A mother who had not recognized that silent and oral reading are very different procedures asked a reading teacher: "How do you explain the difference between my two children? Peter's eighth-grade teacher says he is the best reader she ever had. He reads 800 words a minute with 100 per cent comprehension. We have checked him at home and he can keep it up. If 525 words a minute is the average speed for college students, Peter is good. But when he tries to read aloud to us, he stumbles over the words so that we simply cannot understand him. Peggy's sixth-grade teacher says she is the best reader in the class and sends her around to the different rooms to read stories to the younger classes. Peggy loves to do that. But she never sits down at home to read a whole book."

Peter could probably learn without much effort to read aloud if he had occasions to do so that were important to him. It is too bad that Peggy has not found out or been taught how to read to herself.

How do good readers read to themselves? There is a science urgently in need of being discovered and charted. We have analyzed how poor readers read and then have devised exercises for avoiding and overcoming their weaknesses. Now we want to find out how to start being good

readers and how to keep going forward in expanding reading power.

We can watch good readers and ask them what they *do* to get all their reading done. One trouble is that they do not seem to know what they do, or they do not describe their methods so that a teacher can apply them.

There is a super duper executive who spends only ten minutes a day to find out what is in *The New York Times*. Every day he goes through *The Congressional Record* to get what he wants, including a full supply of conversational witticisms. He keeps up with the magazines and latest books. At any time he may be reading a ponderous history or old classic.

A teacher watched him and listened to his conversation and came to these conclusions:

1. His reading is an active brain in action. It is not mechanical, and no machines could have taught him his many kinds of reading.

2. He has many purposes in reading and uses a special method to accomplish each purpose. Long ago he acquired the habit of pulling out the skills as he needs them. When he begins a piece, he seems to be casting about to decide how to read it.

3. There is no tension or even apparent haste. He doesn't just sit; he settles down in such luxurious comfort with easy attention and thoroughly absorbed interest.

When she asked him if he reads every word, he didn't know. He said, "I think I don't miss anything." Certainly it would not be possible for him to say every word to himself or to read as he reads aloud only faster. No one could read that much faster. He must look at pages as we look at a

vast panoramic scene without saying to ourselves the name of every single object we see. He evidently sees the whole panorama and then holds a magnifying glass over selected spots.

Good readers in the sixth, seventh, and eighth grades may be the best people to ask how they read because they are in the age of discovery of new techniques. If they can disclose their discoveries, they will be the best kind of help for younger boys and girls—and older ones too.

A teacher asked a seventh grader how he reads so much faster to himself than he could read aloud. Does he read every word?

He said, "I see the words, but I don't read them. If 'he said as he galloped over the hill' is in a book, I don't say, 'he said' to myself; I just see him go over the hill faster than I could say the words." After a little thinking he said, "my eyes are a television camera; they pick up the words and translate them to my imagination. I concentrate on my imagination. You have to have an imagination to read science fiction."

Motion picture executives, in search of audiences, have come to one conclusion. "It's the young people who are going to the movies, not their parents," says William Dozier, RKO vice president. "The fathers and mothers are much happier sitting home with their shoes off, watching TV. The great bulk of audiences are in the 13-25 age group."

Man himself is the crowning wonder of creation; the study of his nature the noblest study the world affords.

—William Ewart Gladstone

How can teachers get boys and girls started to read with their imaginations?

We can bear in mind that silent reading has skills of its own that it did not inherit from oral reading. One thing we must never, never do in class is to let all the children look at their books while one after another reads aloud. It is exceedingly annoying to a fast reader to follow the print while listening to someone else stumble along the lines. Besides, it is very bad manners to read to people what they can read for themselves.

What are good ways of learning to ask questions and look for the answers, to tell ourselves in our own words the meaning of what we are reading, of taking the distilled meaning of the printed words into our brains? We do not take in whole and solid words; they must be in some absorbable form so that they can blend with what is already in the brain and stick to it.

We need smart teachers to discover and invent ways for children to learn how to absorb meaning, talk with characters, and take part in action when they read to themselves.

Edpress Newsletter

The average life of workbooks and tests is set at one year; of textbooks, at four to five years; of reference books, at five to seven years.

—Edpress Newsletter

For the twelfth straight year, school and college enrollments have shown an increase. The 1956-57 total figure, for both public and nonpublic schools, stands at 41,553,000. Major breakdown: elementary, 29,618,000; secondary, 8,111,000; higher education, 3,232,000.

—Edpress Newsletter

Our American Folklore - A Story Project

This story program is a correlated overview of American folklore in conjunction with the study of **American history** by an upper grade class. The project covered a time span of three months, during which the emphasis in the literature period was placed on the rich heritage of the American child in the history and literature of his own country.

Background of Group

Homogeneous grouping had made this particular class an outstanding group of children with which to carry out such an enterprise. The class membership was 42, with a median IQ of 111, and a median reading grade of 9.8. The school is situated in a middle class community of home owners who are comfortable but not affluent.

The library experience of the children began in first grade when they came for story hour. As they grew a little older, library periods were lengthened to include reading by the children themselves, and later home circulation of books. Without exception these children had become avid readers of many kinds of books. They were fine students in academic work, and hence well suited to the unit which the teacher-librarian and the social studies teacher had planned. This report, however, deals only with the unit as carried out in the library.

Time Allotment

The class in question had two forty-five minute library periods per week. One period was devoted to circulation and reference and one to literature and apprecia-

tion. From September through November the emphasis in the literature period was purely American. It was planned to devote at least a part of every session to a background discussion, followed by the telling of two samples of American folklore. This worked out fairly well, though it became necessary at times to shorten the version to fit the time available. As this unit of story telling was an overview rather than an exhaustive study, no rigid attempt was made to cover all phases of the subject. As it developed, all this group required was the stimulus, and they read widely where the gaps were left.

Objectives of the Story Program

- 1) To develop and instill an appreciation for the rich heritage in American folklore.
- 2) To add to knowledge of American geography and history through stories, songs, and poems of America when it was growing.
- 3) To help the boys and girls identify themselves with the strong and good of pioneer days in early America.
- 4) To share the humor of these stories, and thereby entertain as well as instruct.

First Period—The Stage is Set

Mounted on one library bulletin board was the excellent "American Folklore and Legends" illustrated wall chart which is superimposed on a map of the United States. It was prepared by John Dukes McKee, published by Scott, Foresman and Company, and made available by Ball State Teachers College of Muncie, Indiana. In pictorial splendor this map introduced

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the young people to the world of American folk heroes.

First we talked about the characters whom they recognized from biographical reading. The Bobbs Merrill biographies, called "The Childhood of Famous Americans" had been read with gusto by these youngsters as they passed through the fourth, fifth, and sixth grades, and many of the names on the map were old friends. Now these youngsters were absorbed in the Messner biographies, the Signature books, and the Landmark series, and they called off the names they knew from these—Davy Crockett, Daniel Boone, Jim Bridger, Buffalo Bill, Marcus Whitman, and Jim Bowie. Pirate LaFitte, Wild Bill Hickok, and Custer likewise were hailed as favorite heroes. Some knew Paul Bunyan and Pecos Bill, but not all.

We talked of the division of the map into regional sections, and how as the weeks progressed we would hear stories from each part of the country. We would start with the East.

Second Period—

The Cast of Characters

Today we talked of the East and its folk heroes—Captain Kidd, Old Storm-along, Ichabod Paddock, John Augustus

Caesar Darling, Joe Magarac. One boy showed an amazing amount of knowledge of Captain Kidd, and as a lover of all sea stories, he spoke with real admiration of this pirate.

When time came for the stories, I chose a short and a long, but of course it was necessary to curtail the longer one to fit the time involved. First I introduced them to Jagendorf's *New England Bean Pot* (Vanguard, c1948) and a New Hampshire tale called "Giant of the Hills." For the longer one I selected Bon-temps' *Sam Patch The High Wide and Handsome Jumper* (Houghton, c1951). Both illustrated rich exaggeration, a quality in American folklore which was to run through all sections of the country.

That particular week this class was programmed to the library for an extra period, and the youngsters asked for another pair of Eastern United States folk stories. From Malcolmson's *Yankee Doodle's Cousins*, I chose the wonderful stories of Joe Magarac and John Augustus Caesar Darling. Since this period was unexpected by both the class and myself, I decided it was a fine opportunity to introduce them to some of the stories they could read for themselves in the weeks to come. Following are the books we talked about:

Blair, Walter	<i>Tall Tale America</i>	Hale, c1944
Bontemps, Arma	<i>Fast Sooner Hound</i>	Houghton, c1942
Bontemps, Arma	<i>Sam Patch, The High, Wide and Handsome Jumper</i>	Houghton, c1951
Gorham, Michael	<i>Real Book of American Tall Tales</i>	Garden City, c1952
Jagendorf, Moritz	<i>Marvelous Adventures of Johnny Augustus Caesar Darling</i>	Vanguard, c1949
Jagendorf, Moritz	<i>New England Bean Pot</i>	Vanguard, c1948
Malcolmson, Anne	<i>Upstate, Downstate</i>	Vanguard, c1949
Miller, Olive	<i>Yankee Doodle's Cousins</i>	Houghton, c1941
Shapiro, Irwin	<i>Heroes, Outlaws, and Funny Fellows</i>	Hale, c1939
	<i>How Old Stormalong Captured Mocha Dick</i>	Messner, c1942
Shapiro, Irwin	<i>Joe Magarac and His U.S.A. Citizenship Papers</i>	Messner, c1948

The folk heroes of the eastern part of the United States became more meaningful from this bibliography. Many of these books were charged out to these boys and girls at their next library period.

Third Period—The South

Today we returned to the map to discover what heroes we would associate with the southern part of the United States in the time when our country was growing so rapidly. On the shelves for some time we had had a Goldenraft edition of *Uncle Remus*, and the book was well-worn from the hands of many readers. Br'er Fox and Br'er Rabbit were known to my young patrons, and they recalled times in the lower grades when their teachers had told them of those animal stories. *Evangeline* was not familiar to them as yet, so Longfellow's poems were procured from the shelves and the story briefly discussed. Pirate LaFitte was a hero to the boys and they gave fine information on this warrior of the sea. Pirate Blackbeard had some young fans who helped out in the discussion.

The stories today were "John Henry" from Malcolmson's *Yankee Doodle's Cousins*, and Bontemps' *Slappy Hooper* (shortened). They were chosen because "John Henry" illustrates the Southern Negro folk hero better than all others, and he is a fine hero because he died trying. "Slappy Hooper" on the other hand is pure exaggeration which the children love, and which so well illustrates much of American folk literature. This story quickly became a top favorite in many classes, for these young readers and listeners shared the wealth with their friends in other rooms.

Fourth Period—The South

No attempt was made to read or tell any of Joel Chandler Harris' *Uncle Remus Stories*. The children for the most part were more or less familiar with the tales, and I also feel that the dialect is most difficult to narrate. If it is done exactly as the book gives it the children often do not understand it, and if it is modified into pure English the entire effect is lost.

I chose instead to use the Southern Appalachian stories of Richard Chase as told in *Grandfather Tales* and *Jack Tales*. Today there was time for more than two stories as these were short. The children loved "Soap, Soap, Soap" and "Sodysal-leratus" from *Grandfather Tales*, although the content was a trifle elementary for them. From *Jack Tales* I selected "Jack and The Three Sillies" and "Old Fire Dragaman." These are typical southern mountain stories, and I was pleased when some of the youngsters noticed their similarity to other fairy tales they had read.

The next literature period was to be a little different, I told the class, for I was making arrangements for the phonograph and recordings. Musical folklore would be the focus of our attention when we met again.

Fifth Period—The South

Today the audio-visual department brought in the phonograph, and we enjoyed the contents of a beautiful album of Negro spirituals. First we talked of these songs, and of the rich contribution of this group to America. Then we listened to

"Swing Low, Sweet Chariot"

"Sometimes I Feel Like A Motherless Child"

"Look Down, Look Down, That Lonesome Road"

"I Couldn't Hear Nobody Pray"
and "Were You There When They Crucified
My Lord"

And then we talked of the books in our

Blair, Walter	<i>Tall Tale America</i>
Chase, Richard	<i>Grandfather Tales</i>
Chase, Richard	<i>Jack Tales</i>
Chase, Richard	<i>Jack and the Three Sillies</i>
Cober, Mary E.	<i>Tony Beaver</i>
Felton, Harold W.	<i>John Henry and His Hammer</i>
Gorham, Michael	<i>Real Book of American Tall Tales</i>
Harris, Joel C.	<i>Favorite Uncle Remus</i>
Malcolmson, Anne	<i>Yankee Doodle's Cousins</i>
Shapiro, Irwin	<i>John Henry and the Double Jointed Steam Drill</i>
Shapiro, Irwin	<i>Steamboat Bill and the Captain's Hat</i>

library which the children could read for themselves on southern folklore. I called their attention to the following:

Hale, c1944
Houghton, c1948
Houghton, c1943
Houghton, c1950
McKay, c1953
Knopf, c1950
Garden City, c1952
Houghton, c1948
Houghton, c1941
Messner, c1945
McKay, c1943

Sixth Period—The Mississippi Valley

The broad valley of the Mississippi now drew our attention. Daniel Boone in Kentucky was known from both history and biography, and Johnny Appleseed needed no introduction. The book on Casey Jones and his locomotive had been read by some of the boys and they filled us in with needed information. Since we had a good film strip on Johnny Appleseed, the machine had been set up in advance, and as we ran it through I told them the version as presented in Malcolmson's *Yankee Doodle's Cousins*. The youngsters loved the beauty of the color and it brought back to their minds the story of John Chapman, and his exploits. These film strips are issued by the Ency-

clopedia Britannica Films, and there are eight in the set called American Folk Heroes. The others are Kit Carson, Davy Crockett, Sam Houston, Myles Standish, Wild Bill Hickok, Mike Fink and Buffalo Bill. While not suggested as substitutes for a story, they do have value in giving to the pictorial minded child an image which he might not be able to produce from mere words. This set is well liked.

The Malcolmson versions of Mike Fink and Febold Feboldson were selected as the stories to tell introducing this area. Neither was familiar to the children and they greeted them hilariously.

For further reading about the Mississippi Valley the following books were suggested to the class:

Blair, Walter	<i>Tall Tale America</i>	Hale, c1944
Gorham, Michael	<i>Real Book of American Tall Tales</i>	Garden City, c1952
LeGrand (pseud)	<i>When The Mississippi Went Wild</i>	Abingdon, c1952
Malcolmson, Anne	<i>Yankee Doodle's Cousins</i>	Houghton, c1941
Sandberg, Carl	<i>Rootabaga Stories</i>	Harcourt, c1940
Shapiro, Irwin	<i>Casey Jones and Locomotive No. 638</i>	Messner, c1944
Shapiro, Irwin	<i>Legendary Life of Davy Crockett</i>	Messner, c1944

Seventh Period—

The North American Indian

While the folklore map does not give much information on the Indians of North

America, I felt that we should spend at least one session on their folklore. Boys are usually fascinated by Indian life, and I drew out the information which they could

give on various tribes and tribal customs. Many had travelled in the West and South, and had visited Indian reservations.

One of the well worn books in our library is Linderman's *Indian Why Stories*, and from this book I chose to tell them the story of "Why The Chipmunk's Back Is Striped." This brought up Kipling's *Jungle Book* and his *Just So Stories*, and

we compared the way the stories were told. Then I went on to Anne Nolan Clark's lovely story of the Pueblo Indians called *In My Mother's House*. Some of the children interested in reading the Newbery Award books had been reading Mrs. Clark's *Secret of the Andes* and recognized her way of writing.

For further reading I suggested these books:

Bowman, James C.	<i>Winabojo</i>
Carlson, Natalie	<i>The Talking Cat</i>
Gridley, Marion E.	<i>Indian Legends of American Scenes</i>
Hooke, Hilda M.	<i>Thunder In The Mountains</i>
Penny, Grace J.	<i>Tales of the Cheyennes</i>
Wilson, Gilbert L.	<i>Myths of the Red Children</i>

Whitman, c1941
Harper, c1952
McClurg, c1931
Oxford, c1947
Houghton, c1953
Ginn, c1935

Eighth Period—Poetry and Song

We took time out today from the prose treatment of early America and its heroes—real and imaginary. I started out with the Caldecott Award, *The Rooster Crows*, by Maud and Miska Petersham. The verses are simple but might have been missed by some young readers, no matter how well read. So I read some aloud, and we talked of how this contribution to America was equally valuable. All children do not see this at once—they seem to prefer the prose version every time.

From there I went on to the *Book of Americans* by Rosemary and Stephen Benet. Reluctantly some of the die-hards admitted that this was successful writing, especially the humorous verses. The fact that this book began to circulate convinced me that it was well worth talking about.

Carl Withers' *Rocket In My Pocket* and Ray Wood's *Fun In American Folk Rhymes* were two more collections which I selected to tell about, and to read from in some detail. I hoped to awaken in them a sense of the rhythm of words, which after all is the beginning of an appreciation of

poetry. On their way out the door that day, more than one stopped to say, "That was fun!"

Ninth Period—The West

We returned to a study of the folklore map as we began to talk about the greatness of America as it spread westward. Even the names gave a thrill—Buffalo Bill, Wild Bill Hickok, Jim Bridger, Jim Bowie from history, and Paul Bunyan, Pecos Bill, Kemp Morgan and Big Steve from legend.

Today surrounding the folklore map were the beautiful pictures of Paul Bunyan so generously sent out by the Advertising Department of the Mead Sales Company, Public Ledger Building, Philadelphia 6, Pa. If each set of pictures is promptly acknowledged, a new set takes its place a few months later. They are a real addition to any reading done about Paul Bunyan.

Since one of the youngsters had been in Minnesota during the summer, and had been steeped in the lore of Paul Bunyan by a relative in that state, I had a real reason for starting with stories about the fabulous

Paul. The three tales from the Malcolmson collection, *Yankee Doodle's Cousins*, were my choice. They were "How Paul Bonjean Became Paul Bunyan," "Old Paul's Camp on the Big Onion River," and "How Old Paul Changed The Map." The humor is so broad, and the flavor so genuine, the children immediately said they liked these stories best of all the regional stories we had read.

Tenth Period—The West

Again today we had the record player, and one of the boys in the class shared his collection of cowboy records with his classmates. "Home On The Range," "The Old Chisholm Trail," and "Bury Me Not On The Lone Prairie," were played and sung to the delight of the junior cowboys in the group. We talked of cowboy movies and western television programs which they loved, and I attempted to tie all this in with the folklore of our country.

The attention of the children was called to folk song collections in our library. *America Sings* by Carl Carmer is a beautiful book, and strongly appealed to the children. Boni's *Fireside Book of Folk Songs*, Lomax's *Folk Songs, U.S.A.*, and Felton's *Cowboy Jamboree* were with-

drawn from the library during the next circulation period by children who played a musical instrument and wanted to try out some western melodies.

For stories that day I used *Pecos Bill and Lightning* by Peck (considerably shortened) and "The White Mustang" from *Yankee Doodle's Cousins*. They were chosen to show humor, excitement, exaggeration, and scope, which the western folklore abounds in, and which must be transmitted to children. They are both good stories and were much appreciated.

Eleventh Period—The West

Today we had more Paul Bunyan and Pecos Bill, but not from the lips of the teacher librarian. Instead the record player was utilized, and the excellent voice of Jack Lester told the stories. These records are available through the American Library Association, and are top notch recordings without the musical background which spoils so many good stories by drowning out the words of the story.

Time remained to remind the youngsters of the collections of western folklore which they could read at their leisure. The following books were suggested to them:

Blair, Walter	<i>Tall Tale America</i>	Hale, c1944
Block, Marie	<i>Big Steve</i>	Coward, c1952
Bowman, James	<i>Pecos Bill, The Greatest Cowboy of All Time</i>	Whitman, c1937
Felton, Harold	<i>Pecos Bill, Texas Cowpuncher</i>	Knopf, c1949
Gorham, Michael	<i>Real Book of American Tall Tales</i>	Garden City, c1952
McCormick, Dell J.	<i>Paul Bunyan Swings His Axe</i>	Caxton, c1936
	<i>Tall Timber Tales</i>	Caxton, c1939
Malcolmson, Anne	<i>Yankee Doodle's Cousins</i>	Houghton, c1941
Peck, Leigh	<i>Pecos Bill and Lightning</i>	Houghton, c1940
Rounds, Glen	<i>Of Paul The Mighty Logger</i>	Hale, c1936
Shepard, Esther	<i>Paul Bunyan</i>	Harcourt, c1924
Wadsworth, Wallace	<i>Paul Bunyan And His Great Blue Ox</i>	Doubleday, c1926

Twelfth Period—Conclusion

We closed our story telling project in

a most fitting manner—by inviting an authority on American folklore to come to

Bennett to entertain, amuse, and instruct. Weeks before I wrote to Martha Bennett King, asking her to please come and bring her guitar. Graciously she did, and fifth, sixth, seventh, and eighth grades sat spellbound in the assembly hall for an hour and a half as she talked and played and sang as only she can. Two of the children who had spent twelve weeks on American folklore had the privilege of introducing her, and telling the assembled group something of what background they had assembled for the task.

The children joined Martha Bennett King in song, and to this day they talk of the day she came. She made them love folk songs, and she sang her heart out to show her love for them. We at Bennett are grateful for the day she spent with us.

Outcomes of the Story Project

- 1) A development in the boys and girls of a richer understanding of their country.
- 2) A widening concept of the depth of

writing necessary to good folk literature.

- 3) A broader knowledge of the relationship which exists between literature and history, whose heroes often are one and the same person.
- 4) An appreciation of the underlying greatness and nobility of the American pioneers—real and legendary—as they sought to make our country great.
- 5) A newly awakened love for the humor inherent in the broad exaggerations of the American folk tale.
- 6) A great amount of reading of folk tales not included in the weekly story period.

From the standpoint of the librarian this was a rich story telling experience—one not to be forgotten easily.

And so the project ended—I hope on a note of triumph. The 398 section of the library is still being raided of the latest in additions to the folklore collection. Those youngsters will not soon forget what fun they had for twelve weeks—nor will their teacher-librarian, who was infinitely enriched by the experience.

HELEN HUUS

How A TV Program Can Be Used As A Springboard to Further Reading

Suppose the children saw *Bear Country* on television last night and come to school today full of talk about the picture. What can a teacher do to capitalize upon this interest and lead the children to further reading? There are many possibilities, but only seven will be discussed here and these are meant merely to be suggestive. Teachers of elementary school children will undoubtedly think of several others.

Factual Material about Bears

The most obvious lead perhaps is to provide

children with books about black bears, their habits, idiosyncracies, and relations to other animals and man. Among such books which the teacher might have available is *The Black Bear Twins* by Jane Tompkins, which is an easy little book describing the growing up of two bear cubs, their antics, the difficulties they get into, the way they play together, especially when they get into the strawberry jam and the rocking

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chair in a cabin.

Older children might try *The Animal Book*, subtitled *American Mammals North of Mexico*, written and illustrated by Dorothy and Nils Hogner. This is really a handbook, and the preface includes definitions of animals and mammals, their classification, and a bibliography for further reading. The section of the book about bears has descriptions of the black bear, the brown bear, the fierce grizzly bear, and the polar bear. Children might like to compare the information about the various bears, and they will be interested to note that not all the bears come from the same family. The black and white sketches which illustrate this book will be an additional source of information and pleasure.

The Biggest Bear on Earth by Robert McCracken is about Little Roughneck, an Alaskan Brown Bear, who lives near the Bering Sea. The story tells about his first fight, his migration to catch salmon, and his exciting encounter with the greatest enemy of bears—man. At last, Little Roughneck, who has grown into the biggest bear on earth, challenges the huge bear, Giant, to a fight and wins the battle, thus gaining supremacy of the area.

Kalak of the Ice, by Jim Kjelgard, is the story of a polar bear who was known as the "mist bear" for she would disappear during a hunt. The story describes the difficulty she had in training her cubs, how she lost several of them but yet accepted the loss rather stoically, and how she trained the three cubs that finally did survive. There is a secondary plot in which Agtuk, and Eskimo hunter, fights Kalak, and by his bravery gains the respect of his people and becomes their chief.

A charming pictorial description of the first polar bear ever raised by human beings is found in *Snowy, The Story of a Polar Bear Cub*, by Jan Vlasak and Joseph Seget. Snowy was born in the Prague Zoo and lived in the apartment of Dr. and Mrs. Vlasak until she was 145 days old. The book has sixty-eight photographs and shows the bear as an extremely likeable baby,

who finally gets too big and must be sent back to the zoo.

These stories of polar bears might encourage children to read other stories about the Arctic, and they will especially enjoy *Boy With a Harpoon* by William Lipkind, which is an authentic description of Eskimo life. In this story, Fish received his name because he had to be fished out of the water when he went on a seal hunt, but he later earns the new name of Little Seal. Another story of contemporary Eskimo life is found in *Oolak's Brother* written by Bud Helmericks. This describes how two American children, Bob and Jeanie Hamilton, live with an Eskimo family when the cargo ship on which they were travelling is frozen in the bay. There are many illustrations showing how Eskimos make their tools and their clothing. How they adapt to their environment is especially good, and the story is very realistic.

Nuvat, the Brave by Radko Doone is another story of Eskimo life. Nuvat's courage in keeping himself alive when the ice floe on which he is hunting breaks away and floats out to sea is the main theme of the book. His triumphant return to his native village makes a very satisfactory ending.

All in all, books and stories giving additional scientific information about bears will enhance the child's experience gained through seeing "Bear Country."

Fanciful Stories With Bears As Characters

Some of the most amusing stories about bears, however, are not realistic at all, but are fanciful stories with bears as characters. One of the funniest of these is *Alphonse, That Bearded One* by Natalie S. Carlson. Alphonse is a trained bear and when his master, Jean Valar, is called for service in the wars between the French and Indians, he dresses Alphonse as a soldier and sends him off in his stead. The hilarious things that happen to Alphonse during his service in the army make a very funny story indeed.

Another humorous tale is *The Bears on Hemlock Mountain* by Alice Dalgliesh. Eight-year-old Jonathan goes over Hemlock Mountain to borrow his aunt's big iron pot. Though there were not supposed to be any bears on Hemlock Mountain, he is happy to get to the safety of Aunt Emma's. When he returns home after dark, he is not so sure about the bears and is glad to be rescued from his hiding place under the pot.

Lynd Ward's *The Biggest Bear* tells what happens when Johnny's cuddly little cub ate the children's food and drank the pig's milk and grew and grew into such a big bear. Something has to be done about it, and the bear finally ends up happily in a zoo, much to the delight of children who enjoy both the pictures and the story. One picture showing the grown-up bear is especially appealing, for it is big enough to suit even the children's imagination.

There is also the perennial favorite, *Ask Mr. Bear* by Marjorie Flack, with its folk-tale-type story and its realistic pictures plus the surprise ending, or *Bear Party* by William Pené Dubois, where the wise old bear gives a costume party when other bears in the park refuse to speak to each other, and of course, *Winnie-the-Pooh*, that bear of very little brain. The Old Norse tale of "Why the Bear is Stumpy-Tailed" and the favorite "Story of the Three Bears" with its several versions, one of which is entitled "Scrapefoot," are other fanciful stories. Then, to top it off, the delightful double-page spread in Maud and Miska Petersham's *The Rooster Crows* showing the bear "who went over the mountain to see what he could see" is such an appropriate illustration, for of course what he saw was the other side of the mountain, and the picture showing him looking over the top with such surprise captures his expression perfectly.

Information About Other Large Animals of the Forest

In addition to the bears in "Bear Country" several other forest animals appear in the pic-

ture from time to time. While some children are reading about bears, others may want to read stories of the larger forest animals, such as the deer, elk or moose. Stories about deer are especially appealing to children, and there are several good ones available. One very easy book, *Dash and Dart* by Mary and Conrad Buff, describes the growing up of twin fawns in simple but dignified language. *Spike, the Story of a Whitetail Deer*, by Robert McClung, follows the growth of a deer month-by-month throughout his first year. It is also simply and factually written and includes exciting encounters with a rattlesnake, a forest fire, and hunters who do not keep the game laws. The illustrations by the author are in soft tones and beautifully complement the text.

Then there is the favorite, *Bambi* and its sequel *Bambi's Children*, both by Felix Salten. Although the animals in these stories talk, they act true to their species. The first story describes how Bambi's mother and the old stag teach him the important lessons of protecting himself from the dangers of the forest. There is the panic of a forest fire and the constant danger from Man, their greatest enemy. In the end, Bambi becomes a handsome, dignified stag, who has learned to be alone. The second book shows Bambi in his role as the stag, receiving the admiration of his children, Geno and Gurri. When Gurri is wounded by a fox, the gamekeeper takes her to his home and puts her in an enclosure, but Bambi jumps the fence and visits her. When Bambi attacks a boy poacher who is nearly ready to shoot a deer, the animals think he is especially brave to fight the "He," as the animals call men. When the deer children are old enough to leave their mother, Bambi instructs them on how to exist in the forest.

These stories emphasize the same idea of leaving the mother as is found in "Bear Country"; when the time comes, the animal parents are adamant and hard-hearted and leave their young to fend for themselves.

Another interesting book, *Horns and*

Antlers by Wilfrid Bronson, includes separate chapters on the white-tailed deer, mule deer, elk, moose, and antelope. Emphasis is given to facts about the animals, their enemies, and means of protection.

Wapiti, the Elk, by Rutherford G. Montgomery, begins when the elk first opens his eyes, and the rest of the book takes him through his life cycle until he emerges as the undisputed champion of his herd. There is much emphasis on the difficulty of finding food and the fighting among the bucks, especially during the mating season. Wapiti is saved from a bobcat and two eagles, but is captured by a man with a rope and put into a corral where he makes friends with Bones, the horse. They break the corral down when their captor is too ill to feed them, and Wapiti stays with Bones until it is time for him to grow his antlers. Then he goes off and eventually gets his herd.

Two very funny books with moose as characters ought to be mentioned here: *Thidwick, The Big-Hearted Moose* by Dr. Seuss describes the fate of the many small animals who build their homes on his horns. He sheds his horns just in time to save himself, but his horns and their occupants end up on the wall in the Harvard Club. The other book is *Honk, The Moose* by Phil Stong. Honk decides to spend the winter in the livery stable, but no one is able to chase him away and he finally becomes the pet of the whole town. Children find this book about the stubborn moose most amusing.

Stories of Little Creatures of the Forest

Now let us look at some of the little creatures included in the film and see what can be found out about them. *The Big Snow* by Berta and Elmer Hader, for example, shows how little animals get ready for winter. *Who Goes There?* written and illustrated by Dorothy Lathrop, tells about a winter picnic for birds and animals in the forest. It includes beautiful black and white illustrations of the different animals and their tracks in the snow.

Stripe, the Story of the Chipmunk by Robert McClung, takes the little chipmunk through his first year by story and illustration, and the chapter on "The Lonely Porcupine Finds a Friend" in *The More the Merrier* by Nils Hogner also tells about several little animals of the forest.

Perhaps the most misunderstood of the little animals is the skunk. He has received his share of attention in books, however, such as the easy *Striped-Coat the Skunk* by Joseph Wharton Lippincott, which is one of the American Wildlife Series. Striped-Coat grows up on Goose Creek, but the skunk family soon moves under Farmer Slown's barn when the brush piles are burned. There they have ready access to the eggs in the henhouse and the clothes on the line, which they use in their nest. The boy visiting from the city finally locates a missing shirt, and there is a reward of \$40 on Striped-Coat's head. He finally finds a refuge, though, and he and his mate set up housekeeping under the log house.

A more difficult account of a skunk is that by John and Jean George entitled *Meph, the Pet Skunk*. The story describes the difficulty Sycamore Will's father is having to make the farm pay. Will finds a baby skunk, Meph (for *Mephitis Mephitis*, their scientific name) and returns it to its mother. He then cares for the skunks throughout the winter. When he learns that his father has sold the farm, Will takes his mother's egg money and decides to run away, but the skunk keeps him home and he replaces the money. The new owner lets the family stay and help make improvements on the farm so that the ending is very satisfactory, with Meph also finding a new home. Other similar books by the same authors are *Vulpes, the Red Fox*, *The Masked Prowler*, which is a story of a raccoon, and *Bubo, The Great Horned-Owl*. Each of these describes the forest, the animals, their habits, and difficulties.

Then there is the delightful *Kildee House* by Rutherford G. Montgomery. The rather ec-

centric Jerome Kildee built his house against a redwood tree in order to have peace and quiet for himself. The little animals—skunks, raccoons, mice and packrats—take over his house, but he makes friends with them all and even carves a monument when Mrs. Grouch, the lady raccoon, is killed by a dog. This is a very amusing story but also gives factual information about the habits of the animals. And finally, there is *Smoke Above the Lane* by Meindert deJong describing how a little skunk takes a ride with a tramp in an empty freight car, then completely upsets the Labor Day Parade in the town when he emerges. How he finally is persuaded to leave the town, and how he and the tramp make friends is a beautifully written story which will elicit the sympathy of children for both the characters. In all these stories the emphasis is upon the skunk's right to his way of life, and that humans are tolerated so long as they keep their distance.

Not to be forgotten are the two delightful books by Robert Lawson, *Rabbit Hill* and *The Tough Winter*. When the word gets around that new folks are coming to the big house, the little animals all wonder if they will be planting folks. Little Georgie, who is the rabbit hero of the book, is sent to fetch his Uncle Analdas, who is wise in the ways of men. All goes well, however, and the people do turn out to be planting folk. They take good care of the animals, and they leave even the lid slightly off the garbage can for easy access. But in the second book, the folks go away for the winter, and the caretaker has a dog. Things get so bad that many of the animals must migrate, but Georgie and his father stick it out. In the spring the folks return and all is well again. These two books are extremely good for reading aloud to a mixed-age group, for each finds something in it for himself, and the animal characters have their counterparts in real life.

Another greatly misunderstood animal is the snake. Although myths about them continue to be perpetuated, it is interesting to note that

many of these children's books give factual information to explode these misconceptions.

The book entitled *Snakes*, written by Herbert Zim and illustrated by James Gordon Irving, is an easy book which describes the reptile family, the habitat of snakes, and their sizes at different ages. The description of the snakes hatching from eggs is especially interesting, as well as the information about how food is hunted and eaten. The sections on keeping snakes as pets and treating snake bite are practical, and the one on myths about snakes corrects erroneous ideas.

The First Book of Snakes by John Hoke, illustrated by Paul Wenck, is another interesting book which shows the snake's place in the world and indicates the symbolic use of snakes such as the caduceus and the "Don't Tread on Me" flag, which was used in colonial days. A very complete description of how snakes move, how their food is caught and killed, where they hibernate, and what to do for the bite of poisonous snakes are included, as well as myths and truths about them. There are very good, clear illustrations in black and white and three colors.

All About Snakes by Bessie M. Hecht is another true account of snakes and their habits. The very fine drawings by Rudolph Freund, including the cross-sectional views, give added clarity to the text. *The Real Book About Snakes* by Jane Sherman includes similar information on a little higher level. The habitat, food, hibernation, reproduction, and means of protection are all included, as well as descriptions of helpful and poisonous snakes, both in North America and the rest of the world. There is also much specific information on keeping snakes as pets.

No description of snakes, however, would be complete without including *Snakes of the World*, by Raymond L. Ditmars and illustrated with many photographs. Although the book is very difficult, it will be read by children who have a special interest or who wish more

scientific information. Included are sections on "The Serpent's World," their general habits, the scientific classification into order, family, genus and species, and specific descriptions of snakes from all parts of the world. Those who are not able to read this scientific account might still be interested in the story of Raymond Ditmars' life as told by L. N. Wood. As a boy, Ditmars was interested in animals, engines and weather, but mostly he was interested in snakes. His mother must have been an unusually tolerant woman, for she allowed him to keep his pets in the attic, although one time he did get into difficulty when a great many flies he had caught to feed his snakes got loose and swarmed all over the house. His first job was with the American Museum of Natural History where he mounted moths and butterflies, and had the opportunity to prepare scientific papers. The biography tells of his exciting hunts for snakes in many parts of the world, his extracting snake venom, and his constant attempts to help people understand all animals, especially snakes.

Perhaps there has been an over-emphasis on snake books here, but often many teachers, particularly women teachers, fail to give children proper opportunities to acquire scientific information because of their own prejudices and fears.

The Forest Environment and the Changing Seasons

Throughout "Bear Country," the constantly changing forest during the different seasons is most impressive. Primary children might be interested in reading *The Little House* by Virginia Lee Burton, for the beginning pages of the book show the house through the four seasons. The full, round, circular effects in the drawings plus the lovely use of color and repetition of scenes make this one of their favorite books. *Song of the Seasons* by Addison Webb might also be used, for this gives a realistic picture through text and illustration of the different animals throughout the year.

Two books written by Glenn O. Blough

might also be introduced. The first, *Lookout for the Forest*, is a conservation story. Children will learn how the forest grows, how it is tended in order to produce lumber, and its part in distributing the rainfall. The work of the forest ranger in protecting trees against fire and fighting those that do start is also an important part of the book. The illustrations by Jeanne Bendick not only enhance the attractiveness but also clarify some of the scientific data. The second, *The Tree on the Road to Turntown*, is the story of a little boy named Skipp, who grows up at the same time as the tree. The life cycle of the oak tree, from the time it began as an acorn until it finally becomes a mature tree and is used for building ships, bridges, and houses, is described in story and picture. In the end, Skipp, who has now become an old man, moves into a house which is built of some of the wood from the tree.

An easy book, *See Through the Forest*, by Millicent Selsam, compares the forest to a tall building with many tenants. The basement of the building is comparable to the tunnels of the moles, chipmunks, woodchucks and shrews in the earth of the forest. The ground floor of the building compares to the floor of the forest, with its flowers in the spring, ferns and grass in the summer and animals, like salamanders, box turtles, skunks, raccoons, foxes, mice and snakes throughout the year. The next story of the building is composed of the trees—dogwood and sassafras—where squirrels, opossums and tree frogs live, while the top story is the place where the hawk and others birds of prey have their nests. The emphasis throughout the book is on the interdependence of the "layers of life" within the forest, and the illustrations showing cross-sectional views do much to give the child a realistic picture of the forest inhabitants.

Children who are especially interested in rock formations and the geological aspects of the forest will be particularly happy to find the book by Herman and Nina Schneider called

Rocks, Rivers and the Changing Earth. This first book of geology describes the work of rivers in moving soil through erosion, in carrying minerals to the ocean, and in cutting through mountains and valleys; it describes the ocean, and tells how land is built up from inside the earth. The black and white illustrations are helpful in explaining the geological concepts and though some of them are somewhat small and detailed, nevertheless, they help to clarify the printed material. Another book entitled *All About our Changing Rocks* by Anne Terry White helps children identify common rocks and would be useful in connection with the study of rocks. The *First Book of Stones* by M. B. Cormack tells how rocks are formed and gives suggestions to children who wish to begin a rock collection. *Rocks and Their Stories* by Carol Land Fenton and Mildred Adams gives much the same kind of information and includes an index with the pronunciations of unfamiliar names and technical terms.

Related Poetry

Poetry related to many of the experiences shown in the film is not difficult to locate; in fact, if one includes weather and the seasons, there are innumerable possibilities. However, just a few will be mentioned here for illustrative purposes.

There are several poems about mice. The favorite by Christina Rossetti, "The city mouse lives in a house,/The garden mouse lives in a bower," or Rose Fyleman's rather gay poem, called "Mice," which begins "I think mice are rather nice," or the one by Lucy Sprague Mitchell called "The House of the Mouse," are available in *Time for Poetry*. "The Squirrel," by an unknown author, is another poem which children like very much. It begins "Whisky frisky, hippety hop/Up he goes to the tree top," and the words and rhythm are both appropriate to the topic.

Robert P. Tristram Coffin has written a poem called "The Skunk," in which he is making a plea for letting the skunk alone. Then

there is the one by Mary Austin called "The Grizzly Bear" with a little humorous twist, for if you ask him where he is going, or what he is doing, "you will never meet *another* grizzly bear."

The seasons offer a great variety of poems from "Autumn Fires" by Robert Louis Stevenson to "October's Bright Blue Weather" by Helen Hunt Jackson. There are any number of rain poems, from "Who Likes the Rain?" by Carolyn Lee Bates to "Fog" by Carl Sandburg, wind poems such as "Windy Night" by Robert Louis Stevenson, "Who Has Seen the Wind?" by Christina Rossetti, or Hamlin Garland's "Do you fear the force of the wind?"; snow poems too, such as Robert Frost's "Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening" or Eleanor Wylie's "Velvet Shoes." Although some of these may seem somewhat far-fetched in their relation to "Bear Country," nevertheless, the ideas and images inspired by the program can be used to lead the children in discovering new ways of looking at familiar things.

Information About Technical Aspects of the Film

Some children may be interested in television and the production of television programs. As a result, they will be conscious of such things as the acknowledgments for technical assistance, and the commercial aspects which are included in the program. Children who notice that the Yellowstone National Park Service and Montana Fish and Game Department has been given credit in the first part of the film may be interested in looking up more about national parks and the park service in *The World Book* or *Compton's Pictured Encyclopedia* under such topics as National Parks, Yellowstone Park, Fish and Game Service, the State of Montana or their own state. In fact, their interest may encourage other children to use the encyclopedia to look up additional material about animals, and advanced students may use such classical sources as Comstock's *Handbook of Nature Study*. Others may use

magazines such as the *National Geographic*, *Nature* or *Life*.

The physical maps included in the film might encourage some children to find more about different types of maps. For example, they might look at *Hammond's Nature Atlas of America* by E. L. Jordan, which is a reference book that describes the best-known species of wildlife in the United States and Canada and includes several kinds of maps. There is also much specific information given in the tables as well as in the Glossary and Index.

Those children interested in the techniques of television production might wish to look at Jeanne and Robert Bendick's book called *Television Works Like This*. This simply written text with profuse illustrations follows a TV program through from its inception to the final viewing in the living rooms of the country, discusses color television, educational television, and future possibilities.

Summary

Although many books have been mentioned in connection with the various topics in "Bear Country" that lead to further reading by children, obviously there are many which have also been omitted. However, children who have enjoyed the same television program can find outlets for their individual interests provided an adequate variety of materials is available. This paper has attempted to show several areas in which a teacher can encourage children to read: some children might read factual stories about various types of bears; some may read fanciful stories with bears as characters; others may read books about large animals of the forest; still others may read accounts of the little creatures; there are those who will be interested in information on the forest environment and the changing seasons; others may enjoy poetry related to the film; and finally, a few may be

interested in pursuing technical aspects of television production rather than in the content of one specific program.

Thus we see that television has come to be an additional aid for the teacher in using and extending children's interests. Teachers need not bemoan the fact that children spend their time in television viewing; they might better encourage children to view those programs which do have educational benefits and which help in developing a discriminating taste.

In viewing the total experience children would get from the viewing of *Bear Country* and the follow-up in the classroom, certain basic scientific concepts are being strengthened. First of all, the continuity of nature is depicted by the life cycle of the bears in the film and of the various animals in the stories—their reproduction, birth, feeding, sleeping, exercise, training, protection, and maturity—all of which points to the completion of the cycle. Secondly, the preservation of balance in nature is illustrated by the fights and escapes of the animals and their ultimate demise until the balance is again restored. The third concept is the animal's adaptation to his environment in terms of protection, coloring, habitat, and food, for unless the animal does adapt to the environment in which he finds himself or moves to an environment where he can exist, he will become extinct. And lastly, the importance of the conservation of natural resources is woven throughout, for it has been primarily through waste practiced by man that many species of both plants and animals no longer survive. These four concepts are all important learnings in science teaching, and commercial television programs, well selected and creatively used by teachers, can become an added aid in improving the opportunities given children in the schools of today.

HOME LAND (Keehashtinigi)

For a family feeling, read
an Indian story!

In Keehashtinigi, the land is big. Level places stretch away to red rock walls or to a far-off place where the sky bends down to touch the sands.

It is still. There is no sound but that of an eagle feather falling or the soft talk of the Wind People in the tumbleweeds.

When darkness comes, the people whose homeland this is, sit around hogan fires and sing the songs they know, songs of The People.

A homeward traveler sings out as he rides through the gray shadows:

My hogan,
My hogan,
My happy hogan,
My blessed hogan,
Hogan,
My hogan.

When the mother's hogan was built, words of blessing were spoken that it might be delightful, that a road of light should ever and always lead to this house. The mother concluded the dedication when she went to the sweet cedar fire lighted for her by the husband and spoke in a low voice more words of blessing:

May it be delightful, my fire.
May it be delightful for my children.
May all be well.

Her world is the world of the hogan, the children, the sheep, the wool, and the loom.

If the shy child behind the mother's skirt were to talk, he would say that he lives happily in his mother's hogan. This

would be a telling of the known things in his life:

"Day by day, I herd my mother's sheep. In the Month of Short Corn, when the earth stirs and green things rise, I walk among the new fields and listen to the song of the mockingbird. Sometimes the voice of thunder is heard. In the Month of Slender Wind, when the nights grow cold, I like to go with my family to the piñon forests to fill sacks for the trader. After the frost has made its presence known and snakes no longer listen to the words of The People, it is good to lie on my sheepskin before my mother's fire and listen to the grandfather tales.

"Sometimes, when night purples the desert and the moon rises big above the cedars, we heap logs on a campfire, and young people dance in a circle of moonlight to the music of a pottery drum.

"Next to my mother, in the warmth of her blanket, when I ride along the home trail, I think it is good to be happy. All around me is good.

Blue sky is above me,
Yellow sand is beneath me,
The sheep are around me,
My mother's hogan is near. (*Little Herder*,
Ann Nolan Clark)

"When cold is over the land and the Hunger People make known their presence, when the winds push against my mother's hogan door and snow water drops from the smoke hole like tears, the words of my father's voice drop softly into

Mrs. Newell is a former public school music teacher who lives in Mesa, Arizona.

the quiet of my mother's hogan.' (*Little Herder*) His belt and my mother's ring will be pawn. Soon we will eat good food, the sun will warm the earth again. My father sings a song to make laughter come to my mother and me."

Nothing threatens this child. In the spirituality of his home, the Navaho child is secure. Here he learns of the mother role, the father role, and those things by which they raise up their children—quiet dignity, the duty to "walk fittingly where birds sing and the grass is green." Always contemplative, they proceed reverently in a world full of beauty and as large as all of nature.

In a world where unrest is felt by the children as well as the adults, where emotional illness is a matter of growing concern, we sometimes seek to give to the young, through the vicarious experiences in books, satisfaction of some basic needs, the greatest of which is security in the love and safety of affectionate family relationships. This family bibliotherapy, more to prevent than to cure, is to be had in abundance in Indian stories. Herein are found all the elements of spiritual security which a child needs to build his ideals and patterns for family life and for subsequent larger worlds.

The curtain draws on a family scene in almost any chapter of almost any book by Ann Nolan Clark. A favorite picture from *Little Navajo Bluebird* shows Doli's family before the fire in Mother's hogan. Father and Uncle sing all the songs they know. Life is good. It is beautiful and good. Doli leans against her father's knee. She sings very softly a song of her own. She sings it for Father, for Uncle, and for his wife. She sings:

Oh, beautiful,
Oh, precious,
My family.
Oh, beautiful,
Oh, precious,
My life,
My beautiful life.

In *Chia and the Lambs* (Margaret Phelps), another story of a small Navaho girl, the new hogan is blessed with corn meal and the father's prayer song:

May my house be blessed,
From my head to my feet,
Where I lie, and all above me,
All around me, may my house be holy.

The blessing ceremony is over when the mother makes the Salutation Fire. Chia draws her three lambs close against her velveteen blouse. "All things are beautiful," Mama Navaho says as she touches Chia's face, and Chia knows she is right.

On a sage scented morning we see Younger Brother and his family having breakfast ('mm, jam from the traders!) around a campfire outside the hogan (*Waterless Mountain*, Laura Armer). While sweet cedar smoke rises to greet the morning sky, the family works in the shade of a cedar bough shelter, Mother at her loom and Father finishing a bracelet into a silver circle of song. The gray cat stretches in the sunshine on top of Mother's loom. Everything sings a song.

Laughter, a great family unifier, fills the morning on another day when the Big Man cannot start his car. Younger Brother (knowing full well the magical power of juniper juice) chews a sprig and boldly spits at the radiator. The engine turns over, and the car buzzes out of sight.

Baby sister laughs so hard that she falls right down in the sand just as Brother and the pink sheep reach the hogan. Mother picks her up and laughs too. Soon

the whole family is laughing and no one knows how it all started. Even the pink sheep laugh, "Baa, baa, baa, baa." The burro joins in with his "He-haw," and a blue jay in the juniper just screams at the top of his voice. It all comes about through the spitting of juniper juice, and that surely is enough to make the whole family laugh.

In my mother's house

In Tesuque everything is centered in the fireplace of the mother's house, and the plaza, where the people are *always together*. "In my mother's house the walls come close around me in a good way." Here it is good "to stand close like our houses," says the Indian child through Ann Nolan Clark. The pueblo, the People, and fire, and fields, and water, and land, and animals—

I string them together
Like beads.
They make a chain,
A strong chain
To hold me close
To home,
Where I live
In my mother's house.

Within the tribe the Pueblo's life was always extremely cooperative, and herein lay his strength. "The mother's house does not stand alone, but like holding hands the sister houses stand close together." People worked together at building and tending the irrigation ditches and places of worship. They helped one another in the building of new rooms for growing families.

There was no emotional hunger here, but love and friendship—social patterns in which every person had a part, where the individual and group nourished each other.

Alice Marriott, in her distinguished biography of *Maria: The Potter of San Ildefonso*, tells us there was never any doubt in Maria's mind about where she belonged in the world. Whatever happened, wherever she went, and whatever she did, her home and her place were in the pueblo. Being away from home was being away from a part of life that was bigger and more important than herself. She needed to feel the pueblo around her to feel that she was safely alive.

Maria's mother always taught her daughters that it was the woman's part of living to hold things together—to make things whole. Men could build up or tear down houses and ditch banks, but women put clay and sand together to make pottery or cooked several foods at one time to make one dish.

And it was hard to say, Maria thought, who had more need of strength in a family. The man needed his power for singing and ceremonies and work; but the woman, as her mother had taught her, needed her power for the man.

In *The Rains Will Come*, a drama of a Hopi boy and his family in time of drought, Florence Crannell Means unites a lost child with his family, and this, along with the rains, brings the happy ending. Lohmay's mother was right, as she always was. When the heart is good, everything is happy. And though the drought may be long, in the end the rains will come.

There are other rewards too in reading some of these Indian stories. Among the authors are some who have gained the stature of greatness in children's literature, several being Newbery winners. Just to savor the cadenced prose of Ann Nolan Clark, Laura Armer, or John B. Prescott

(*Meeting in the Mountains*) is a song forever. Florence Crannell Means, Florence Hayes, and numerous others also belong in this distinguished group. Such writers as Oliver LaFarge and Alice Marriott, in addition to their skill in story telling, bring to their work years of ethnic research and recognition.

Perhaps from our reading we will find a new friend. Perhaps these stories, which have evolved from the romance of Cooper and Longfellow, through the befeathered stereotype, down to a modern and valid representation of a real Indian, will reveal to us for the first time the understandable and human Indian who feels much the

same as we do.

Perhaps we may have awakened in ourselves a new appreciation for Indian art, which was born of the vast spaces, from sun and solitude of desert mountain and mesa. And we may hope for some of the quiet of their home lands to enter into our noisy day.

Perhaps we can gain family insight in a way as surprising as the sudden beauty of Indian paint brushes or poppies on a canyon wall, by merely reading about Indian children in their homes with their mothers and fathers. We might find the strongest link yet for the chain which holds us and our children close to home.

REXFORD W. BOLLING

So - You've Got A Problem!

At times it seems that a teacher has an extraordinary number of problems to face. In looking at her class, she frequently sees the problems of each pupil, the problems of the groups within the class, as well as the problems involving the different phases of curricular instruction. We all know people who, unable to face this knotty multiplicity, have left teaching for a less complicated life. Indeed, to all of us at times, teaching children seems to be an ordeal.

In spite of our concern, we are frequently unable to put these problems into words. When we might gain some relief by objectifying the situation, we frequently suffer in silence. At other times, we verbalize our problems in complaints. Sometimes we even write our problems down so we can get a better look at them. But, what then? Even when we know what

our problems are and can see them objectively, are we able to do anything about them?

We sometimes resort to problem-solving activity

Psychologists inform us that human beings are capable of several kinds of problem solving activity. In simple problems, like deciding what flavor of ice cream to eat, the solution may come instantaneously. In more complex problems, one may have to break the complex into a group of simpler elements and then fit the resolved pieces together later. At times we may use a reasoning process, arriving at an answer by sheer logic. Judgment, gleaned from previous experience, also plays its role in problem solving.

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There are certain pitfalls to avoid in problem solving which should be mentioned. One should tend to avoid combining a few facts and observations into a general impression. Impressions often force us to ignore other facts and observations.

Wishful thinking also directs our problem solving away from reality in the direction of fantasy. It is particularly easy for teachers to practice wishful thinking, especially when they are trying so very hard to see the growth in their pupils.

Finally, there is the factor of suggestibility. Perhaps we place too much faith in our experts and fail to trust our own ability to attack problems. All of us, at one time or another, suffer from leaning on the crutch of another's learning. When that other person is wrong, we are wrong.

Committees as a problem-solving device

A few years ago, education was waterlogged with committees. There were committees, sub-committees, interim committees, standing and rising committees, committees made up of representatives of other committees, and committed committees. Today, we still have many committees, but "committeitis" has passed, and they have assumed a more constructive role in education.

Theoretically, a committee is an ideal device for solving a problem. Interested representatives may sit together and "hash out" the problem in great detail. The results are then taken back to the original group from which the committee was formed.

Many people criticize committees on the grounds that they are wasteful of time and, particularly, that they have little di-

rection in their thinking. The latter contention has much to support it, in my own experience with committees.

Research as a means of problem solving

Diametrically opposed to committees in technique, if not in purpose, is pure research. The researcher utilizes the scientific method rigorously in order to direct his investigation. He is controlled by the experiment, and the experiment is controlled by him. He measures and weighs, compares and repairs, figures and reports.

Certainly one should not belittle the pure researcher. He is playing a very valuable role in our society, but doing pure research is not for the average teacher.

A problem

Let's take one of those problems you allegedly have. Suppose you have a group of fourth grade children who need remedial work in reading. Let us assume further that your knowledge of the teaching of reading has been limited to your preparatory courses in college and the fourth grade reading series, furnished by the State. Is there a fourth grade teacher who has not faced this problem, at least in part? What can you do?

You might try problem solving. Certainly you have a problem. Does an instantaneous solution occur to you? Are you prepared to split the problem into elements and attack each separately? How's your sheer-logic-quotient? Judgment? Whose? Here's where the pitfalls come in. The average teacher probably generalizes the way Flesch did. Phonics worked for Jerry once, why not mass produce phonics? Probably some of these youngsters could profit from phonics instruction, but let's

not commit ourselves to that one technique. Perhaps we need a committee.

And so a committee is born. The members present idea after idea, some good, some inadequate; and somewhere, sometime, recommendations will be made. The major difficulty here seems to me to be that the recommendations are usually based on opinion alone and are not truly usable.

Turn to research. Leaf through page after page of research on reading. It is incomprehensible to the average teacher because it requires a specialized vocabulary for understanding. It is written in research jargon and is interpreted through educational statistics.

Won't somebody please help?

Action research is meant for you

Stephen Corey¹ in his book on action research implies that action research is the art of being as objective and scientific as you can, while trying to improve a situation.

Action research represents a technique between that of pure research and simple problem solving. Its traits as compared to pure research are as follows:

1. In action research the design may change as research moves along.
2. Action research is successful if it results in improvement in practice. Traditional research is successful if the same results are obtained if the experiment is repeated, and if the generalizations are of wide applicability.
3. Action research is cooperative; the researcher must take into account the ideas, experiences, and opinions of pupils, teachers, administrators, parents, and other lay adults.

¹Stephen M. Corey, *Action Research to Improve School Practices*. New York: Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, Columbia University, 1953.

4. Random sampling is used in traditional research, while in action research the teacher works with the pupils in his classroom.
5. In action research statistical techniques are deliberately kept at a minimum.
6. In action research, motivation is within a teacher who wants to improve his classroom practices. In traditional research there is a search for truth with some hope that outcomes will influence procedures.
7. In traditional research generalizations are applied through large groups or areas. In action research generalizations are applied in terms of the researcher's own classroom.²

Generally, when a person participates in research himself, he will get a great deal more out of it than he would if he were merely reading about it. Participation by all is the keynote of action research.

What are the steps in action research?

1. Let's go back to our problem. The fact that you want to do something about your fourth grade poor readers implies that you are dissatisfied with the situation as it is. This *discontent* is the driving force behind any improvement. It will cause you to try to do something about it.
2. The problem must now be stated. This may be the most important step in the process. Great care must be taken by the teacher or teachers performing the research to state the problem carefully so that it is not so broad that it cannot be solved. Obviously, our original problem was much too large. It should be delimited so that it represents a clear-cut, specific element of remedial reading instruction at the fourth grade level. A group might decide for example on the problem, "What would be the effect on these readers of teaching a basic recognition vocabulary?" Many other specific problems can come from this area, obvi-

²Minutes of the Curriculum Planning Committee for October 14-15, 1955, San Diego County, San Diego, California.

ously. There is certainly enough work for everyone to do action research.

3. With this problem in mind, you now have to form hypothesis. How can you best resolve this problem? Solutions occur to you. By studying these solutions, getting opinions, and reading other research, or perhaps merely by selecting what appears to be the most plausible solution, you arrive at your hypothesis. In our illustration, it might be something like this: "By playing a Bingo game together, children will develop a basic recognition vocabulary."
4. Now we test our hypothesis. In this case, we probably go through the following steps:
 1. Test the recognition vocabulary of the group.
 2. Develop a Bingo Game which will give drill on recognition vocabulary.
 3. Let the group use the Bingo Game for controlled lengths of time.

4. Test after several intervals to ascertain the levels of growth.
5. Evaluate the Bingo program in terms of total growth, as well as the interval growths. (We might find, for example, that most growth occurs in the first two weeks and that after that, it is negligible.)

Success or failure in this hypothesis represents success or failure in only one aspect of our original problem. We will need to do a great deal of action research to uncover all the implications of remedial reading at the fourth grade level. Many patterns of testing each hypothesis are possible. We must use our imaginations and our basic knowledge of research.

So—you've got a problem? Let's do something about it! Action Research is for *you* to use. It will help *you* solve *your* problems.

RUSSELL F. SCHLEICHER

Elementary Hobby Show

The many avenues for teaching good language usage are readily opened by the use of a hobby show in the elementary grades. A class begins to study activities involving language, both written and spoken, with each lesson pointed toward a culminating activity, the hobby show. The daily lessons teach the meaning of a hobby and its value to an individual. In the discussions the pupils are helped to speak about hobbies on an acceptable level, while written work is stimulated by the interest aroused and standards are formulated for this phase of language.

The hobbies of adults are first mentioned by having the children give brief reports about the avocations of the father

and mother. Since this is an experience report, the pupils have great freedom to speak in a natural manner of a familiar activity. As the thinking of the class progresses, there is developed a growing list of the types of hobbies. Among these are the hobbies of entertainment, collections, creations, and participation.

An analysis of each hobby type shows that each one brings satisfaction at the same time that it requires time, materials, certain personal traits, and environmental factors. Pupils recognize that hobbies are as diverse as the characteristics of all hu-

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manity. Out of this grows a feeling of tolerance and kindness toward others who do things in a very different manner from the customs and modes of our own immediate little world. Creative and activity hobbies are excellent counteracting forces for the sedentary spectator habits and the questionable values of comic books or of unsupervised gang play.

Pupils discuss the origins of hobbies or the reasons why a person begins an avocation. They talk about the organization of hobby materials, and sources of information related to each individual hobby. The value of organization and arrangement of collections is stressed. The versatile interests that hobbies generate are commended, and encouragement is given for all to seek a channel of interest and prepare to report on a present hobby or a hobby-to-be.

When a great fund of knowledge has been accumulated, a decision to display personal hobbies is quite a logical outcome and not difficult to elicit from the class. This decision entails further planning. First, a time for the event is set by the cooperative scheduling based on teacher plans, pupil activities, community events, yea, even the possible weather is not to be ignored.

The matter of display space is important. There must be sufficient space to do justice to the displays. Factors of safe placement are considered for the fragile and valuable things. Then there is a need to consider space for those who will come to look at the materials brought by the class members.

There is usually an urge to have other classes come to see all the variety of beauty, rarity, or commonplace. This necessitates a formal invitation to another

teacher and formal greetings to the classes as they arrive to view the exhibit. Here again, there is practice in structural language, letter form, and original expression.

When the hobby exhibits are brought to school on the appointed day, there is overflowing enthusiasm and pupil activity. Teacher guidance is available and needed from time to time until all the arrangements of materials are satisfactory to all concerned. The tables used are soon covered with things of beauty, interest, and pride to the exhibitors.

At this point of development, the child is again given the front and center of the stage, as he tells in glowing words the story of his hobby. This is the peak of his endeavors to be an accepted person. He now can tell about 'My Hobby' in a satisfied way, of its beginnings and development, and of his present status as a collector, organizer, creator, or participant. There is opportunity to exaggerate, to some extent, for the one who has to gain status. While the exaggeration is recognized by all, it is never condemned or ridiculed. Instead an effort is made to set the exaggerated viewpoint as an aim for future growth in the avocation being discussed.

The achievements noted in this hobby talk are many and of various types. Children are encouraged to use clear statements with good sentence formation. New and interesting words are added to the hearing vocabulary of the class by the one who has already used these words in his speaking vocabulary. There is a wealth of factual information imparted to others, including the teacher. Much humor is revealed by the alert active thinking of the group. As the pupils talk, there are re-

vealed attitudes and habits that are commendable. There is evidence of maturity and poise which is pleasing to note and a wonderful reflection on the help parents and teachers have given in the child's growing-learning situation.

The hobbies placed for examination are of interest for various reasons. A few attract attention because of their rarity or oddity. Some of the exhibits appeal because of some historical aspect of the present age-development of the pupil.

Nature has high priority in holding the developing child's interest. Children gather, as all children do, stones that are bright, smooth, or odd. Leaves of all sizes, colors, and shapes attract their attention and may lead to a scrapbook on trees. The world of insects or reptiles, at first fear-some, becomes a scientific project. Many things that are aromatic are eagerly sought and held until the last trace of the odor is gone, while even the putrid or foul-smelling materials have a negative fascination, but scientific interest.

For many children there are many interests, but usually one soon becomes dominant. Fossils, semi-precious stones, and primitive flint tools are engrossing to many children who will carry the same interest into adult life.

The surprise element of growth or development of plants never fails to reach some children. They love flowers, but will use flowerless plants in building a herbarium or as part of a terrarium.

When a child has chosen animals as a hobby, he is involved in a relationship with an animate object that is somewhat parallel to the person-to-person relationships which are so vitally important in the world of today. The care of the animal is

sure to demand kindness, promote regularity of habits of feeding and grooming, and stimulate an inquiring mind into biological sciences as well as other allied fields.

A hobby, such as collecting sea shells, is of strong appeal to a child of the interior states. The shells have color, shape, texture, size appeal in addition to the wonder that arises when thinking that they were once parts of living organisms and that these marvels of nature have a sea-sound when held to the listening ear.

A doll collection is certainly natural for the pre-adolescent girls. It has values of history, art, and race-sociology, whether it is merely a collection and organization or the creation of original models.

From the viewpoint of the boys, sports pictures, armed forces patches, and similar materials are the accepted things to collect. Match-book covers are included in the chosen things for boys. A child who collects marbles proves that objects are again stronger than pictures and words in their appeal to a child. Marbles have mobility, color, texture, and a distinct sound which determine a child's desire to collect.

Coin collections have values that are both intrinsic and extrinsic. When the child can freely discuss the designers of coins, the mint marks, the mints, changes in coinage and use vocabulary of the collector, such as "obverse" and "milling," he has made a good deal of progress in his educational growth. He is proving his interest and maturing into a well-rounded individual.

The use of stamps as a hobby has values similar to coin-collections. The fields of art, history, geography, science, and biography are all covered in the total

realm of the stamps. The vocabulary of stamp collection is wide, interesting, and challenging to the collector. The friendship of zealous stamp collectors can become of life-time value.

If there is any doubt of the values of such a project as is being described, it is merely necessary to live with an eager

group, listen to their comments, or witness their enthusiastic activities and all doubts will be dispelled. The teacher can be included in the enthusiasm and become a part of the learning group, proving again that versatility and continuing growth are some of the most necessary qualities of the best teachers of today.

CELIA HOPKINS

Spelling and the Language Arts

A language arts program aims to develop each pupil's ability to grasp the thoughts of others and to express clearly his own thoughts orally and in writing. Children need to grow up with a feeling that spelling is directly related to expressing in writing what they have to say. A method that emphasizes this relationship requires presenting spelling lessons in the form of sentences made up by the pupils. The sentences are an outgrowth of the child's daily work. Although the pupils study individual words, their spelling emphasizes writing whole sentences rather than lifting certain key words from a paragraph. This procedure has many advantages:

- (1) From the outset spelling involves the expression of a complete thought.
- (2) Capitalization and punctuation are introduced in a natural and meaningful manner.
- (3) The habit of using capital letters and punctuation marks is established through daily use.
- (4) Little words are used over and over again and become fluid and easy connections between more

difficult words.

- (5) Children get a feeling of confidence in the use of words and their application to daily work.
- (6) Spelling becomes a means of written expression, rather than an end in itself.
- (7) Each child is given more opportunity to develop to the limit of his individual possibilities.
- (8) This method of spelling appeals to the gifted child as well as to the child with limited ability. The former develops confidence and skill in using the natural, rhythmical thoughts of little children. The latter, if their attempts are received with encouragement, will often achieve surprising results.
- (9) Comments made by the children show that they enjoy spelling.

The advantages of this type of approach to spelling are particularly emphasized when the method is permitted to grow out of the language arts program as

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it is developed from the kindergarten on through the elementary school. This background lends itself to the developmental program of spelling that contributes to the total growth of the child.

In kindergarten children talk about the pictures they draw. If the teacher can take time to write these sayings on the child's picture, she can use them later to read aloud to the circle. In this way pictures and thoughts become meaningful, for as we all know, pictures are a child's first step in expressing ideas. As the child watches his thoughts put on paper by the teacher, he experiences his *first* concept of written symbols as a means of conveying thought. At this stage spelling is merely a perceiving of symbols.

In the first grade the above step is continued, plus cooperative group stories related to an experience enjoyed by all. These are dictated by the class and written before the class by the teacher. Thus the child sees many ideas united to form a complete story. At this level the child is able to copy short stories or take notes home to mother. He becomes aware of individual letters and the next step in spelling is started.

In grade two the group experience stories and other forms of writing met within grade one are continued throughout the year; for it is during group work that interesting and varied ways of expression are developed. By means of questions the children are encouraged to express their feelings in words that are descriptive. These ideas are then carried over by those who are ready to write stories of their own.

Science and social studies offers many opportunities for group work. The more capable readers hunt through the class-

room library for answers to questions posed by either the children or the teacher. The story is read to the entire group. A summary is then dictated to the teacher by the listening group.

The bulletin board may show a series of pictures which depict an historical scene. The children then relate the story in their own words. The child thus becomes aware of a real need for spelling as a means of expressing his own thoughts.

As a first spelling lesson the children are given papers and told to write their names. A teacher can well say in introducing this phase of the work, "How nice it is to write our names without help, now that we go to school. I am sure there are many other words you can write without help." Teacher repeats, "We go to school." "Let us see how much of that story we can write." Double lines are drawn on the board. Volunteers easily write the first three words. 'School' presents a problem. "We can learn this word just like we learned to spell our names." The sentence is left on the board and later in the day the grammatical aspects are considered, such as a capital letter and period. The idea of a sentence is also discussed. The sentence is corrected and copied from the board as a writing lesson. The teacher notes and helps correct specific problems in letter formation and spelling. The next day papers are returned and the sentence is read aloud. The word 'school' is studied as a problem word.

"Let us see if we have learned our new word." Papers are turned over and the entire sentence is written. The teacher walks about the room making any corrections necessary. These papers are taken home. Usually this is sufficient for an in-

troductory lesson.

The next week a new lesson is introduced. "What do we do at school?" Several sentences are suggested; all of which are written on the board:

"We play at school."

"We read books at school."

"We sing and draw at school."

Each sentence provides a week's lesson. These beginning lessons contain much repetition. At the same time they are directly related to the child's experiences. In October we are ready for such sentences as:

"The leaves are falling."

"The leaves are pretty colors."

"They go swish, swish, swish."

"Halloween will soon be here."

"It is fun to dress up."

The word 'Halloween' is left on the board for those who needed to copy it. A surprising number of children learn to spell such words. Here is a worthwhile and undramatized challenge for pupils capable of meeting it. As words are introduced that are beyond the recognized ability of the average for the class, they are not discarded, but treated in this same manner. They become a challenge rather than a discouraging obstacle. Many children thus build up a spelling vocabulary that would otherwise be an untapped source of possible growth. Many of these words are learned quickly because of their association with pleasurable occasions.

As each problem word is studied, careful attention is given to auditory and visual analysis.

As the class grows in spelling skills, they are encouraged to attempt stories of their own. After corrections are made, and in order to promote and maintain a desire

to write, individual stories are saved and a very simple cover is made to hold them. A title is voted upon and the booklets are put in our library for the year. The following are a few samples of creative stories as they were written with their original spelling, capitalization and punctuation. Several children's dictionaries are at their disposal. Sometimes two children work together. Some of these children showed exceptional verbal skills in reading, writing and spelling.

One girl wrote this description of a Jewish religious celebration:

manorah manorah i light you tonight.
manorah manorah please shine bright.
Hanukah Hanukah starts right now
manorah manorah please make a bow.
a drydel to spin a manorah to light
Hanukah Hanukah starts to-night.

January 2, 1952

Here is another sample of second grade. This piece was written during our study of the Sun, Moon and Stars. Words in parentheses indicate words that the children intended to write.

I like the Stars at night
the stars make pretty desins. (designs)
The stars make to (two) star Dippers.
The Stars make the Little Dipper and The
Big Dipper.

One recess we went out to enjoy a sudden snow squall and its big white flakes covered us. Several days later this appeared:

fludering, fludering fludering (fluttering)
fludering little snow flakes.
come, come, come Down little snow flakes
little snow flakes Like the stres, (stars)
are coming fludering Down.
Down fludering little tinei thgins. (tiny things)

Pictures on the bulletin board and a general discussion of autumn brought

these ideas from another girl. Orange, red and yellow crayons were used to write these thoughts.

Leaves, Leaves, Leaves.
See the red Leaves.
See the yellow Leaves.
Fall is here.
Down come the Leaves.
Down, Down, Down,
you can rake leaves in the fall.
Pumpkins Pumpkins
Big Pumpkins, orange pumpkins
you see orange pumpkins in the fall.

After reading the story of Jeremy Mouse, a boy wrote:

Jeremy mouse
It was time for Jeremy breakfast.
He didnt want his breakfast.
naught naught boy. (naughty)
you sould eat your breakfast. (should)
and be big and strong.
no no i wont eat my breakfast.

(Can't you see this boy re-living his own experiences in this thought?)

Two children brought their kittens to school one morning. These stories were an outgrowth of that visit:

Patsy and Megan brought their kittens to school.

They are so cute, They chase each other around the room. When we went out on the playground they went in their box.

Another girl wrote —

The tow (two) Little Kittins
They rill (roll) and play and run away
and hop all over things.

This boy with limited reading ability dictated his story which was added to his

graphic illustration:

The little kittens like to play in the book-case.

The next step was to obtain a statistical measure of our work. Once during the first half of the year the class is given a review of the words we have used in sentences. These words are given as a list, out of context. Twenty words are selected, ranging from easy to more difficult. Another test of the same type is given the end of February and a third, the end of April. In May, we give *The Progressive Achievement Test*, 1942 Edition.¹

Following each successive second grade for the past three years the results of this standardized test has enabled us to measure objectively our spelling attainment.

This does not imply that here is a cure for all spelling ills. Pupils show wide variations in the application of their ability to express their ideas on paper, just as our reading program shows great variations in reading ability and growth. However, results so far have indicated the possibilities of an interesting and functional language arts program, which merits further investigation of results over a longer period of time.

¹Devised by Ernest W. Tieg and Willis W. Clark
Published by California Test Bureau
3636 Beverly Boulevard
Los Angeles, California

Grade 2—1952
Form A—Primary Battery
Range—1.8 to 6.0
Median—3.1

Grade 2—1953
Form A—Primary Battery
Range—2.0 to 3.8
Median—3.1

Grade 3—1953
Form B—Primary Battery
Range—2.6 to 6.0
Median—4.3

Grade 3—1954
Form B—Primary Battery
Range—2.7 to 5.3
Median—4.0

Grade 4—1954
Intermediate
Range—2.6 to 9.0
Median—5.6

Grade 2—1954
Form A—Primary Battery
Range—2.3 to 5.6
Median—3.1

Progress Report on the Champaign Reading Study 1952-55': A Review and Discussion

In the spring of 1950 the primary teachers of Community Unit School District No. 4 in Champaign, Illinois initiated a study of their current reading program, as well as of other reading materials available for use. In the process of this initial study there came to the attention of the group a "new reading method" consisting of materials that have as their express purpose the development of independence in reading through mastery of word perception skills through a phonetic approach.

The group became interested in these materials and in their purported value in promoting word perception skills. As a result, in the fall of 1952 a three year study was undertaken to test the effectiveness of these materials by comparing the reading achievement of children taught with the phonetic system with those who were being taught in the "traditional manner."

This report published under the title, *Progress Report of Reading Study 1952-1955*, is the result of this study using experimental and control groups in grades I, II, and III. Through the use of numerous tables and graphs, comparisons are made showing the superiority of the phonetic approach.

The Nature of the Experiment

The materials—The experimental materials described in the study have as their aim the development of independence in word perception through a synthetic approach to phonetics. Prior to the reading of story content in the first grade the children are taught the sight and sound of the letters of which words are

composed, and a "few simple yet powerful phonetic generalizations regarding their use."² These materials teach the sounds of vowels first, since "the vowel is the basic unit in the syllable and since most consonants depend upon vowels for their specific sounds."³ It is presumed by this method that the child learns the sounds of the isolated letters of the alphabet and applies this knowledge to words he meets in his reading. Since the materials "do not rely upon repetitions of words for their mastery, words are introduced at a relatively rapid rate."⁴ The materials are accompanied by a teacher's manual which gives lesson plans and a summary of the principles of phonetic analysis.

At no place in the study is there a description of the materials or the teaching procedures used with the control groups. Reference is made several times to a "traditional method," but no description is given of it.

The teachers—Five teachers initially volunteered to begin teaching the phonetic materials in the fall of 1952. A total of 102 pupils were involved giving an average class size of 20+. It is impossible to determine from the study whether these five teachers continued with their groups into the second grade, and finally into the third, or whether they picked up a new first grade each fall. At any rate, in the second year of the study ten first grade and five second grade teachers were doing the experimental teaching to a total of 332 pupils (average class size, 22+). The third year a total of forty teachers and 710 children (average class size, 17+) were involved in the experimental program. Though no statement is made with respect to how the experimental teachers were selected beyond the first grade, the inference was that they also volunteered

¹Margaret Henderson, *Progress Report of Reading Study 1952-1955*, Board of Education, Community Unit School District No. 4, Champaign, Illinois (no date).

²"Description of Materials and Methods Used in the Champaign Reading Study," (Mimeographed, no author given).

³*Ibid.*

⁴*Ibid.* (*Ibid.*)

as they became interested in the project. The original five teachers "represented a range in experience from one year to twenty-six years."

No statement is made with respect to the number of teachers involved with the control groups. However, one might assume that all teachers not teaching experimental groups taught control groups. Neither is the reader informed as to their experience or training. One cannot determine from the study whether certain teachers continued from grade to grade as might have been done in the experimental groups. Engaged in the control groups the first year of the study were 508 children. In the second year there were 995 pupils, and 1209 the third year.

*Detailed analysis of the third year results—*Because of the favorable results of the study to the experimental groups during the first two years, the committee decided to make a detailed appraisal of the program in the spring of 1955, using those children in grade III who had had three years of the experimental program. For comparative purposes the experimental third grade groups were equated with a "sample of the third grade pupils who had been taught by the traditional method" on the basis of socio-economic level, race, intelligence, readiness scores, and sex. Apparently the groups were not matched case for case, for there were 93 pupils in the experimental group and 197 in the control group. Several different tests having subtests to measure reading ability, spelling, vocabulary, and study skills were selected for the purpose of appraisal. Comparisons were made as will be indicated later.

The Results of the Experiment

*Results of the original study—*During the period the study was in progress the *Gates Primary Reading Tests, Types I, II, and III* were administered to the first graders in both experimental and control groups at the end of each of the three years. The results were consistently in favor of the experimental groups on all parts of the tests. Typical of the results

were those of the first grade groups in May 1955. In Word Recognition the experimental group earned a median grade score of 3.1 while the control group earned 2.2. In Paragraph Reading the experimental group earned 2.5 and the control group 2.1.

Similar results in favor of the experimental groups were indicated in the second and third grades where the *California Primary Reading Tests* were used for comparative purposes.

The detailed analysis of the third year results where equated experimental and control groups were compared, showed consistent results in favor of the group using the phonetic program. Typical of these results were those for the *Metropolitan Reading Tests* which showed that for Reading Comprehension the mean grade score of the experimental group was 4.4 and for the control group 4.0. For Vocabulary the experimental group earned 4.8; the control, 4.3. In Work-Study Skills—use of the index, the dictionary, references, etc., the experimental group was likewise superior to the control group.

In addition to the study of reading achievement, samples of children's writing were analyzed. Stories were analyzed in terms of the number of sentences used, the placement of independent and dependent clauses, the number of relational words, etc. Though no tests of significance were applied to the differences between the means of the two groups it seems apparent that the data are inconclusive in showing the superiority of either the experimental or control group.

Discussion of the Study

Classroom research of the type illustrated by this study is highly desirable and should be encouraged from all quarters. More light could be thrown on our educational problems if teachers and supervisors on the grass-roots level would select problems or segments of problems that could be manipulated and would subject them to practical classroom study. From this standpoint the Champaign study has merit.

However, it is important that in any type of research—classroom as well as institutional—great care must be exercised in setting up the study. Approved techniques and procedures must be used, limitations recognized, and above all, in an experimental study such as this was designed to be, all of the variables but the experimental variable must be controlled as rigidly as possible. Only through such care may valid data be secured.

In a recent article Dolch⁵ discusses the basic principles of the design, execution, and interpretation of reading research. It was unfortunate that the committee executing this study did not have access to Dr. Dolch's article, for they might have profited from his suggestions.

It might be presumed from an uncritical reading of this progress report that the final word had been spoken with respect to the method to be employed in teaching primary reading, and that a return to a phonic approach would truly solve all reading problems. A careful analysis of the study and its findings, however, raises many questions which should be answered before definite results may be claimed for the experimental method employed.

1. How did the teachers who volunteered to carry out the experimental program compare with those teaching the control groups? Is it not to be expected that those who would volunteer for a study such as this would be the ones who would be keenly interested in the method and who would possess the characteristics that would make any study succeed and that would literally guarantee results in favor of an experimental factor even before the study was initiated?

2. How was the factor of teacher time controlled, if at all? Did the teachers in the control groups put in the same amount of time in learning to use their materials, to teach their classes, to prepare for their lessons as those in the experimental groups? We do know that the teachers in

the experimental groups worked assiduously. In the words of the study (p. 44) we read, "All of the teachers felt that they worked harder on this study than they ever worked before." This fact in itself would place serious limitations on any comparisons and interpretations made. Another teacher of an experimental group said, "If I spent many hours working out ways and means to get every child to make the greatest possible gain, I have felt repaid . . ." (p. 44) Did the control teachers spend equivalent hours "working out ways and means to get every child to make the greatest possible gains?" With interested, motivated, enthusiastic teachers, teaching skillfully and being willing to put in extra time to effect a successful project, the results obtained are only what one would expect, regardless of materials or methods.

3. What was being compared in the study? Apparently two different instructional approaches to reading were under review. One of the approaches, the experimental, was described in much detail. We know its essential features. But what is meant by the "traditional" method employed by the control teachers? Was this an experience approach or a basal materials approach? If the latter, was a single basal approach used or a "co-basal"? Was adequate time spent on systematic skill development? Were in-service training sessions employed to help the control teachers use their material effectively as was done in the experimental groups? One could continue to ask innumerable questions, the answers to which might seriously limit the interpretations of the study. An analogy might be drawn here in comparing the performance of two cars. One we know by name, model, and year of manufacture. The other is known only as a "traditional" car—no name, no knowledge of its age, defects, or number of miles driven. A comparison of the two cars obviously would be meaningless.

4. Are the results obtained through the use of the phonetic materials any greater than could be secured by another approach, for example, the use of a basal program used skillfully and creatively? Though no reference is made to it in the *Progress Report*, it is a rather striking fact that in

⁵E. W. Dolch, "School Research in Reading," *Elementary English*, 33: 76-80 (February, 1956).

1949 the Superintendent of Champaign's Community Unit School District No. 4 presented his annual report to the taxpayers under the title, *Learning Through Living*.⁶ This report describes a year of progress in the Champaign Community Unit and shows, among other things, the results of the reading program as organized at that time.

Though the 1949 and the 1955 studies are difficult to compare due to the fact that they overlap only in grades II and III, and because different tests were administered at different times, the following comparison involving the children in grade III is worthy of note.

Median grade score*
(Comprehension)

1949 (All children, February) 4.4

1955 (Experimental group, May) 4.2

In other words, the children in grade III through the use of the basal reading program in use in 1948-1949 were achieving in reading comprehension in February on a level two months beyond what the experimental groups were achieving in May, 1955 through the use of the phonic program! In the light of the 1949 findings what was the motive for a radical change in the teaching procedures?

It appears that we have in the recent Champaign Study a limitation found in so many experiments where a researcher is attempting to show the superiority of a particular teaching method—the difficulty of holding constant the variable of method. How much of the reported growth in this study was due to the phonic approach *per se*, and how much to the teachers, their enthusiasm, the amount of extra time they devoted to the program, the

amount of individual attention exercised, and similar factors? It is obvious that in this study there is reported not only a new approach to reading instruction, but a new approach in the context of a new situation. What part of the results is due to the *method* and what part to the *situation* is a question left unanswered.

It is the sincere desire of all school people to provide the best in the way of materials and approaches in the teaching of our children. As in the past, research will continue to point the way, but it must be research that employs rigid controls and makes its interpretations and draws its conclusions in strict conformity to its findings. Otherwise we have research that actually deludes those who try to interpret it.

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The Story of the Champaign Study

In Champaign, Illinois the meetings of the Board of Education are open to the public and all communications media. Any report presented to the board thus becomes a public record subject to whatever approval or disapproval, understanding or misunderstanding, interpretation and analysis it may accumulate from the school staff, school patrons, or the public. This depends on the degree of interest the subject matter may generate or the emphasis which news editors may give it by their determination of its news value.

Public schools are public institutions supported by public funds. The activities carried on and the achievements made must be reported to the school patrons regularly, continuously, and honestly if the necessary financial support is to be forthcoming and faith in the educational system maintained.

The possibility that public school aims, needs, activities, and achievements may be misconstrued by those who read hastily or listen lightly is an occupational hazard harshly famil-

⁶Champaign Community Unit School District No. 4 (E. H. Mellon, Superintendent of Schools), *Learning Through Living*, Champaign, Illinois, 1949.

*The grade score for the 1949 study was derived from the use of the *Progressive Primary Reading Test* and is reported in *Learning Through Living*, p. 7. The score for the 1955 study was derived from the use of the *Metro-politan Reading Test* and is reported in *Progress Report of Reading Study*, p. 24.

lar to teachers, administrators, and board members.

The foregoing article makes a comparison of two reports made by the Champaign Board of Education. Since they differed in their nature and intent, it is essential that the circumstances surrounding their publication be made clear.

Learning Through Living was the annual report of the Superintendent of Schools for the year 1948-1949. On April 10, 1948, a Community Unit District had been formed by referendum, including rural areas which had previously been separate school entities. The report, a 36-page illustrated brochure, described this whole educational system, financial, physical and academic. Since the first year's activities had included a study of test materials in all these previously unrelated schools, two pages of the section dealing with the elementary program showed a tabulation of the children's scores in language, spelling, arithmetic, and reading. In spite of the medians which have been mentioned, distribution of the scores indicated that in the third grade 36 per cent of the children were below the national norm in vocabulary, and 26.6 per cent were below in comprehension. While these percentages were not given in *Learning Through Living* they would seem to offer justification that re-examination of the reading program was not so radical a move as it might seem.

The Progress Report of Reading Study was presented to the Superintendent and the Board of Education by the Director of Elementary Education at the board's regular monthly meeting on September 12, 1955. It was exactly what the name implies, merely a report of progress. Use of the word "progress" in the title should indicate clearly that no final conclusions had been reached. The 72-page report was a careful record of what had been done to date in one community by the primary teachers in that community to find a means whereby more of the community's children might learn to read better.

The study was not organized to *prove* the superiority of one particular method of teaching reading over another. It was undertaken to determine *whether these children, taught by these teachers, using this material, in this school system could achieve a higher degree of skill in reading.*

If one is to assume that the aim of a reading program is to help children acquire a skill by which they are able to recognize printed words, understand the meaning of the words, and apply the knowledge gained for pleasure, profit, or survival, much more than the figures representing test results should be considered. It would seem reasonable to suppose that an analysis of teaching methods in any skill should include some examination of whether once acquired the skill is put to use.

While the *Progress Report* did contain detailed records by tabulation and graph of the results of a far more extensive testing program than would normally be considered necessary in any public school (which show the distribution of the scores as well as medians) a great deal of further information is included as well. Standardized tests are of great value to teachers as measurements of learning, but those who work closely with children are acutely aware that they represent only a partial picture of achievement, since success or failure in teaching and learning includes attitudes on the part of both teacher and learner which are totally immeasurable. The sympathetic interest of the parents in the Champaign study, for instance, and in the progress of the children in the experimental groups, must be considered as a factor which had influence on the results. Yet it is also a factor which defies measure or control.

Two-thirds of the report, therefore, included the deliberations of the committee of teachers which first began the evaluation of the existing reading program in the spring of 1950, the procedure which was followed in choosing the materials to be used in the study, as well as information gathered from the parents re-

garding the children's behavior at home during the course of the study.

The material itself is described as follows on p. 4 " . . . all the word perception skills were included, not just phonics. It was evident to them (the teachers) that the word-perception and comprehension skills involved in the new method were similar to the ones they had been using, but varied in the method of approach, in timing and in emphasis."

No mention was made in the report of the reading series which were then in use and are still being used as supplementary readers, since this information was well known to both teachers and parents in Champaign. If readers feel this omission important, the information may be obtained from the Superintendent of Schools at 103 No. Lynn St., Champaign, Illinois, where copies of the "Progress Report" are also available.

The report also contained recommendations that a careful follow-up program be planned, observations by the Director of Elementary Education on the children's classroom behavior and in the Appendix were to be found in the texts of the questionnaires which were sent to the parents, as well as the form which was used to determine teacher reaction.

It was recognized with some trepidation that the report of the reading study might be of interest to the public beyond the 90-square mile boundaries of Unit #4, due to Dr. Rudolph Flesch's experiences in the field of teaching reading which were published in February, 1955.

It is unfortunate that helping children learn to read is not as easy for most people as Dr. Flesch seems to have found it. If it were, public schools would simply issue directions to the parents of pre-school children that along with knowing his name, address, how to use a handkerchief, go to the bathroom by himself, and cope with his own snow boots, the incoming first grader should also know how to read well. Life would be simpler for educators, civilian as well as professional!

That valuable contributions to improvement in teaching techniques and methods are to be made by classroom teachers is undoubtedly true. Even the soundest educational theories must be tempered by the wisdom, common sense, and experience of those who spend much of every day in the company of the children who are to be taught.

Since successful teachers are those who understand children, the successful teacher is acutely aware that any method requires constant improvisation depending on many undefined and uncontrollable factors present in the children themselves, their state of health, their backgrounds, the condition of their homes, and even the time of year.

With larger numbers of children being presented to public school systems by almost every community, plus the added responsibility which transportation supervision, and lunch hour activities bring, teachers, already overburdened, face a frantic "race to stay in the same place."

Any attempt at improvement necessarily means extra work, extra hours, extra study, and more meetings to attend. A teacher, conscientious though she may be, with the interests of her pupils deeply in her heart, will be reluctant to take on these added duties unless she can feel some assurance that her efforts at improvement will be judged in the light in which she has undertaken them and with a clear understanding of the limitations imposed by a system of compulsory education.

It is interesting to note an article by Calvin Greider which appeared in the August, 1956 issue of *The Nation's Schools*. As a means of enlivening public schoolmen's summer reading, he recommends that serious consideration be given to "the many excellent reports and studies published by school systems in all parts of the country." He states that the practice of reading these reports will have several good outcomes. "It will help counteract provincialism, a disease which affects a great many community school systems. The materials will inevitably yield up a host of ideas, descriptions

of practices, problems and solutions, some of which are bound to set off a useful train of thought."

That any reader of the *Progress Report* should have boarded a train which carried him toward the delusion that a final word had been spoken on so complex a matter as teaching

reading or that the material used was a return to phonics is sincerely regretted by those persons whose courage, vision, and diligence planned and executed the Champaign study.

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CLOTILDA WINTER

Interrelationships among Language Variables in Children of the First and Second Grades

In 1955 Dr. Clyde Inez Martin reported the findings of a year's study of the interrelationships among language variables in children of the first grade.¹ Her findings were based upon the use of six measures of language development in one hundred first grade children. The present article reports the results obtained when the same one hundred children were tested at the end of their second year in school.

In September, 1948, 240 first grade children from eight classrooms in Austin, Texas were chosen for the study. These children were from three different elementary schools. These three schools were chosen intentionally to represent comparable neighborhoods so that the total group of pupils would represent a reasonably homogeneous sample in terms of socioeconomic status. The children were tested at the beginning and at the end of their first year in school. At the end of the second year, there were 156 of the original 240 children left in the eight classrooms; however, complete data were available for only 101 of the same children who were included in the first-year study. One of the children had a severe hearing loss, so he

was eliminated. This left one hundred cases for use in both studies.

The Problem

In order to determine some of the most important factors in the language development of boys and girls in the first and second grades, and, if possible, to discover interrelationships among those factors, an effort was made to answer the following questions:

1. Are there developmental interrelationships among all these factors—motor ability, oral language, drawing, reading, writing, and spelling?
2. If relationships do exist, how significant are they?
3. Are the coefficients of correlation obtained at the end of the first year significantly different from those obtained at the beginning of the first year?
4. Are the correlation coefficients obtained at the end of the second grade significantly different from those obtained at the beginning and at the end of the first grade?
5. What factors in the development of language patterns are revealed through fourteen case studies?

¹Clyde Inez Martin, "Developmental Interrelationships Among Language Variables in Children of the First Grade," *Elementary English*, (March, 1955), 167-171.

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Measures Obtained

Two school years were spent in collecting the data summarized below.

1. At the beginning of the first year, the Metropolitan Readiness Test was given to all the children in the study.
2. The Metropolitan Achievement Test Primary Battery I, Form S was given at the end of the first year, and Primary Battery II, Form R was given at the end of the second year. Since the Primary Battery II tests include spelling, spelling scores were also obtained at the end of the second year, but the spelling and reading scores were used independently.
3. Samples of the children's drawings and writing were collected at the beginning of the first year, at the end of the first year, and at the end of the second year. Drawing scores were determined by use of the Goodenough Intelligence Scale, which consists of the drawing of a man. No effort was made to compute intelligence. The raw scores were used to determine drawing measurements. Writing measurements were obtained by comparing the samples of manuscript writing with the Metropolitan Primary Manuscript Handwriting Scale.
4. Data concerning the experiential background of each child were compiled during the first year.
5. The oral language of each child in a show-and-tell situation was recorded by wire recordings at the beginning and end of the first year and again at the end of the second year. These were transcribed and analyzed to determine the total number of words used, the number of different words used, and the average length of sentences.
6. Motor tests that consisted of the writing of names from memory were given at the beginning and end of the first grade and again at the end of the second grade.
7. The vision of all pupils was tested with the Massachusetts Vision Test at the end of the first year and at the end of the second year.
8. The hearing of all the pupils was tested

with an audiometer at the end of the first and again at the end of the second year.

Treatment of Data

All of these data were analyzed at the beginning and end of the first year and at the end of the second year. At the end of the first year coefficients of correlation were computed among the measures of language variables which were gathered at the beginning and end of that year. The increments between the two sets of data were computed and correlated with the first set of measures. At the end of the second year, coefficients of correlation were computed among the measures of language variables which were gathered at the end of the second year. Then a comparison was made of the correlation coefficients which were obtained at the beginning of the first grade, at the end of the first grade, and at the end of the second grade. This was done by testing the significance of the difference between two correlation coefficients obtained at widely spaced times. Fourteen children were chosen from among the one hundred for individual case studies, and a comparison of their patterns of language development was made over the two-year period.

Findings and Implications from Group Data

A majority of the correlation coefficients represented either a low stable degree of association between language factors or no significant relationships. There was a high degree of constancy of the relationships among the language factors over the two years in which the children in the study were in school. Only the two vocabulary measures—total length of response and the number of different words used—were found to be highly dependent upon each other. A moderate degree of relationship was found to exist between reading and spelling. With these exceptions, then, the matrix of correlation coefficients over the two years represented the presence or absence of a low but stable degree of relationship between relatively

independent language variables. The presence of this low stable association as well as the lack of any relationship among other factors are important considerations in the planning of learning experiences for primary grade children. The following implications for teaching seem apparent as a result of the group findings in this two-year study:

1. The low stable relationship between reading and drawing seems to indicate that experiences with crayons and paint are of value in a readiness program for reading, and also after the actual reading from charts and books has begun. Visual memory and other skills which call attention to detail are necessary for both drawing and reading. Many primary teachers ask children to express the ideas they gain from reading a story by drawing a picture to share with the other children. In view of the findings in this study, this practice seems wise, since the drawing probably helps to clarify meanings and gives a clearer understanding of the material read.

This does not mean, however, that reading and drawing need to be treated as completely dependent upon each other. The low stable relationship indicates that they are relatively independent; therefore the unique skills in each variable require many learning activities independent of the other.

2. The negligible relationship found between reading and two measures of oral language (total length of response and the average length of sentences) seems to indicate that learning to read has little or no dependence upon oral language as tested in children's show-and-tell situations. A low stable relationship was found to exist at the beginning and at the end of the first grade between reading and vocabulary (the number of different words used).

The measures used in this study were judged to be the best and the most feasible ones available at the time the study was planned and executed. Hence the findings of the investigation should be accepted at face value. If research

on this aspect of the problem were to be pursued further at a later date, a somewhat different approach might be contemplated. This future study might be carried out under conditions in which the teaching of reading involved the use of content based on the actual experiences of the children. This content could well be derived from the things the children talked about in show-and-tell. Under these conditions the testing instrument for reading achievement would also need to be one which contained the same sentences, phrases, and words included in the content used for teaching. Contemplated from this approach, the amount of relationship found between oral language and reading might or might not be significantly different from that found in the present study. The results would be most interesting.

3. The absence of a stable relationship between reading and motor control indicates that a first and second grade child's ability, or lack of ability, to write his name from memory apparently has nothing to do with his success in learning to read. In fact, the negligible and low relationships between motor behavior and the other variables indicate that motor responses are completely or relatively independent of the language factors.

4. The inference may be made from the low stable relationship between reading and writing that the first and second grade child's achievement in writing is dependent to a small degree upon his skill in reading. This seems to indicate the advisability of a delay in writing activities until some skill has been achieved in reading. Also when the child begins to write and to read his own writing, the two may strengthen each other.

The fact that the relationship between these two variables is small also indicates that the two may be treated in many instances as relatively independent factors. For example, writing needs to be taught in a systematic manner as a skill to be learned in itself. The di-

rection of the strokes, formation of the letters, spacing, and alignment are things which require careful teaching in a systematic manner. There are also many skills in reading which require teaching completely independent of writing.

5. The low stable relationship between drawing and writing has implications for a readiness program for writing. A program which consists partly of painting with large easel brushes and scribbling and drawing with large crayons and pencils seems to be an effective way to help first and second grade children acquire skill in written communication.

Again, the low stable relationship indicates relative independence between the two factors. Even though the above statements concerning a readiness program and rich art and writing experiences seem to be substantiated by the small stable relationship, the small association also points toward the need for providing and arranging experiences in which the two factors are treated as independent variables.

6. The small stable association between motor scores and drawing scores also has implications for teaching of primary children. First and second graders who are well-developed in motor coordination involving the muscles of the hands and fingers are probably able to express their thoughts through drawing better than those who have not developed such skill. The implication is also there that rich experiences in painting and drawing tend to help children develop finer muscle co-ordination. Here again, however, there seems to be evidence of the relative independence between motor scores and the other variables.

7. From the negligible relationship between writing and the average length of sentences in oral language one may infer that the primary grade child's skill in writing by copying is completely independent of his skill in the thought levels of oral communication. These two variables have little or no dependence upon each other; therefore they need to be treated as

separate functions in the planning of learning experiences.

8. The low stable relationships found between writing and the two vocabulary factors of oral language at the beginning of the first grade and at the end of the second grade seem to have implications for a readiness program for writing. The two variables seemed completely independent of each other at the end of the first grade, but a small stable relationship was present at the end of grade two. This relationship was evident in several of the individual case studies. The children who were writing original stories and letters were also making rapid progress in their oral vocabulary. Perhaps, if writing is delayed until children have developed an oral vocabulary sufficient for putting their own thoughts into written form, the quality of writing will be better because of the interest in recording those ideas.

9. The negligible correlations between drawing and all three of the oral language measures implies that there is little or no association between the spoken language of children and the nonverbal language of drawing. This lack of relationship has implications for helping the shy, retiring child who is having difficulty in expressing his thoughts before others in a verbal manner. If drawing and oral language are treated as two completely independent factors, as the findings in this study show them to be, then perhaps the timid, retiring child can learn to express his ideas through drawing. In addition, the child who cannot excel in drawing may be able to do so in oral communication. On the other hand, since these factors have little or no dependence upon each other, the child may do equally poorly in both areas.

10. The moderate correlation found between writing and motor scores at the beginning and end of the first grade implies that writing is substantially related to motor development in the first grade. The shift in that relationship at the end of the second grade, which indicated a weakening of the association,

was probably due to a leveling off of the motor skill required for writing one's name from memory. There are implications here for a readiness program for writing which includes activities involving the use of the muscles of the arms, hands, and fingers. Experiences with art materials such as painting with large brushes, finger painting, construction with wood, clay modeling, drawing with large crayons, and cutting and pasting seem to be effective ways to help primary grade boys and girls develop the finer muscles necessary for success in writing.

11. The low stable relationships found to exist between the average length of sentences used in oral language and the two highly correlated vocabulary measures have implications for a rich and varied program in oral communication for first and second grade children. The high correlation between the two vocabulary measures substantiates this implication. It seems that the more experiences children have which give them things to talk about, and the more opportunities they have for telling about those experiences, the larger their vocabularies become and the more skill they acquire in organizing their thoughts into sentences.

12. The first and second grade child's ability in oral language seems to be completely independent of his gross muscular skill. The inference seems to be that a primary grade child is not to be expected to succeed in activities that involve gross muscular coordination merely because he is a skillful and fluent talker. Nor is the child who excels in motor activities to be expected to perform at the same level in activities involving oral communication. Again, these two variables need to be treated as independent factors in planning learning experiences for young children.

13. The moderate association found to exist between spelling and reading, and the low stable relationships between spelling and motor skills, drawing, and writing substantiate the idea that success in spelling is relatively de-

pendent upon these other language factors. A readiness program which involves rich experiences in reading, drawing, and other activities designed to build the motor coordination necessary for writing seems to be a helpful way to foster success in spelling. Since spelling and reading involve many of the same phonetic and word analysis skills, spelling achievement helps children become better readers when they reach the level at which the above skills are useful to them.

The low but stable relationship found between spelling and writing points toward a program which involves learning to spell the words the children actually need in their writing. The small relationship also indicates, however, that the two are relatively independent, and that all the spelling need not be taught through actual writing situations. In fact, it points toward a program in which both methods are used. Learning to spell involves certain skills which need to be taught in a very systematic manner just as writing does.

14. The negligible relationship found in this study between spelling and the three oral language measures implies that the first and second grade child's ability in show-and-tell situations has little or nothing to do with his progress in spelling the words on the Metropolitan Achievement Test.

Case Studies

The data from the case studies of the fourteen children who were chosen from the group of one hundred boys and girls in this investigation revealed the individuality of the patterns of language development of first and second grade children. The following points seemed to stand out as a result of this look at some of the individual children in this study:

1. There were some similarities in the pattern of language development among all the cases.
2. Despite the similarities, each child's pattern of language development seemed to be unique.

3. There seemed to be a steady progress in each language area throughout the two years.
4. Most of the boys and girls seemed to have been working up to their potential by the end of the second year; even though some appeared to have been "slow-growers" and some "fast-growers."
5. In the case studies there appeared to be specific illustrations of the relationships as well as the lack of relationships found among the language variables.
6. The quality of these first and second grade children's development in language seemed to result from the action and interaction of many factors within themselves and their environment.

Teachers, parents, and other persons who work with primary grade children become very glib at times concerning the development of these boys and girls. Many assumptions are made which the findings in this investigation tend to deny. For example, many persons assume that the first grader who comes to school knowing how to write his full name from memory, or who is able to speak fluently, is certain to be successful in every phase of learning. The assumption is also made that all good readers are good spellers, and that success in spelling is highly dependent upon success in reading. The results of this research have revealed that these and other similar assumptions

may not be valid. For example, the findings in this study show the association between reading and spelling to be only moderate. This implies that learning situations need to be provided in which the two are taught independently as well as in relation to each other.

The interpretation of the literature may be responsible for some of these assumptions. The relationships among the language areas have been neglected for such a long time in planning learning experiences for boys and girls that there is danger of interpreting the literature to mean that there should be complete integration in the teaching of the various facets of language. This study does not show this to be a true picture of the situation, however, since the majority of the correlation coefficients were found to indicate a complete or relative independence among the language variables measured.

The persons involved in this study hope that the findings and the implications drawn from them will cause teachers and other persons working with first and second grade children to be more careful about the assumptions that are made, and to plan learning experiences which will consider both the relationships and the lack of relationships found in this two-year study.

"... Every now and then some prophet speaks out against the teaching of reading and some of the more intelligent, but ill-informed patrons, rush to the schoolhouse in wild-eyed indignation. They want to know 'how come little Reginald is not reading as well as mama or papa did at his age.' Generally they say mama, for it is well known that women are smarter than men and that mama always could beat papa talking and reading by two or three laps. Some teachers will say that when this happens the thing to do is to send them to the principal. Let him or her do it. Aren't they paid for it? That, however, will not solve the problem.

Criticism of reading instruction is a staff problem and should be taken up by the Reading Committee. Every school should have a

reading or language arts committee which should be composed of all teachers. This committee should take up the public relations problem that is involved here and use the best possible strategy to cope with it. . . .

—Gerald Yoakam in
The Reading Teacher,
"Challenges Facing the
Teacher of reading in 1957"



"... Children's books do not exist in a vacuum, unrelated to literature as a whole. They are a portion of universal literature and must be subjected to the same standards of criticism as any other form of literature. . . ."

Lillian Smith, *The Unreluctant Years*

Windows on the World

The Popular Arts in the Classroom

Edited by PATRICK D. HAZARD



Patrick D. Hazard

Gadgetopia: First Steps Down the Road of Technological Suicide

A few weeks ago I saw a film designed by General Electric to help public utilities put their best public feet forward. *Freedom and Power*, to ignore for our present purposes its glib equation of private utility with the public good, got into what I fear was a totally unconscious tangle about the relationship between political freedom and electrical power. In its efforts to push both old-fashioned Americanism and the sale of electric appliances, *Freedom and Power* dragged the enlightened political realism of the Founding Fathers down to the level of next year's wonder gadget. Somehow the viewer came away with the implicit assumption that being able to switch on the toaster from bed is no less important a development than the signing of the Declaration of Independence. This outrageously naive attitude towards new gadgets as a sure sign of human progress is one that seriously jeopardizes our sanity and maturity as a nation.

And this overvaluing of the gadget is directly related to an already existing crisis: the shortage, approaching disaster, of scientists and engineers to keep the wheels of technology moving efficiently. For the gadget encourages a lassitude and relaxing of disciplines which paradoxically threatens the future of gadgetopia, the brave new world in which everything, even humans, are untouched by human hands. The push-button mentality tries to slough off its burdens of freedom onto the machine; the human will and intellect then atrophy, smugly cognizant of so many horsepower at their disposal. Consider how the great majority have dumped their humanness on machines: the passive TV watcher; the hotrodder gunning his motor to bolster a diminished ego; teenagers

soaking themselves for hours in the warm sound bath of the jukebox; housewives floating in a sea of soap operas for days on end. When we wonder why we don't have enough people willing to achieve the intellectual disciplines necessary for competency in science and engineering, we ought to look first at the machines that we worship and that in turn have enslaved all but a few of us.

And if a young person is lucky enough to have avoided the engines of distraction that trivialize a good many minds in fan-book philosophies of life, he must avoid yet another trap. Why shouldn't he become a smugly optimistic seller of gadgets instead of slaving away for several years in some "dull" library or laboratory to become an underpaid teacher or scientist? Indeed, the cards are stacked against a technological culture at the moment. To survive as a highly complex industrial civilization, we must somehow ignore the siren calls of optimistic gadgetry and that systematically organized in attention fostered by the mass media.

When one looks to television, for example, for programs that will instill in young people a curiosity and a sense of the importance of intellectual discipline, the programs are few and far between: *Mr. Wizard*, Saturdays, 12:30 p.m., NBC-TV; *Zoo Parade*, Sundays, 3:30 p.m., NBC-TV; *Johns Hopkins File 7*, Sundays, 3:30 p.m., ABC-TV; *Odyssey*, Sundays, 5:00 p.m., CBS-TV. The Bell Telephone Company has promised a four-a-year series of programs in prime evening time to start turning the tide; *Our Mr. Sun* was the first effort. Most of the

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science programs come during "off-hours" when audiences are small. Although the Bell program was unnecessarily patronizing about the mass audience's need for gimmicks to galvanize it to attention, it is on the right track in using prime evening time. For our technological civilization to mature, we must use our major instruments of communication to create respect for and understanding of the scientific enterprise among most of the people. It's not a matter of sentimentality; either we spend our energies replenishing our sources of intellectual strength or we dissipate them in gargantuan quiz shows. The real tragedy of the quiz and participation shows is not especially their parody of real knowledge and wisdom; it is rather that they encourage a muddleheadedness that make our kind of specialized, intellectually based civilization impossible. TV brainwashers bite the technological hand that feeds them.

It will be a long time before the popular arts begin to pay their just debts to the technologists that make them possible. To hasten that day, teachers can do two things: use programs like those listed above, in addition to series like *Disneyland* and *Let's Take a Trip* that frequently have science shows; and develop interest in science in books. It would be a pity if those shows struggling for an audience silently disappear. (*Mr. Wizard* is in danger of losing its NBC network slot, at this writing.) One way to encourage viewing of these shows is to allow children to present imitations of the programs in class—using the formats of Don Herbert, Sonny Fox, and Marlin Perkins to increase the effectiveness of their language arts training. There are books published on *Mr. Wizard* and *Zoo Parade* that should make such a strategy possible for your students.

Science reading ought to be increased at all levels of instruction. For the young, science biography might be an answer. The great scientists from Archimedes to the Los Alamos group are inspiring individuals. Our students

know enough about Jimmy Dean and Elvis Presley; we should encourage them to cultivate real heroes whose conflicts and victories mean something in a lasting way. Picture books are another possibility: The American Geographical Society and the National Audubon Society have continuing series of albums on geography and natural history. *Life Magazine's* splendid new junior edition of *The World We Live In* (Simon and Schuster) is an example of how our technology of communication can be used to conserve our values instead of frittering them away as in exposé magazines and comic books. The Children's Book Section of the New York *Times* (November 18, 1956) contains notices and ads for excellent material in this field. But the compilation of a list of such books has been delegated to the competent hands of Mrs. Ruth Stewart, Head of Work with Children at Brooklyn Public Library. Her two lists—new approaches to science today and man's progress through invention—follow:

New Approaches To Science Today

Compiled by Ruth Weeden Stewart, Coordinator of Work with Children, Brooklyn Public Library.

Bridges by Henry Billings. Viking 3.50

Bridges are treated here with full majesty. The text presents both the engineers' contributions and the romantic side of these fascinating structures.

Clouds, Rings, and Crocodiles by H. Percy Wilkins. Little, Brown 3.00

An imaginary voyage in a rocket ship offers a new channel to the young astronomer. Written by a member of the Royal Astronomical Society the book presents facts and theories through the medium of space travel.

Exploring Mars by Roy Gallant. Garden City 2.00

Colorful diagrams and pictures by Lowell Hess make this study of Mars very exciting. Observations on what may be found on this planet will stir the imagination.

The Golden Book of Science by Bertha M. Parker. Simon & Schuster 5.00

This book serves as an attractive introduction to many fields of science such as astronomy, weather, elementary physics, biology and others. Excellent illustrations add to the appeal.

The Great Nutrition Puzzle by Dorothy Callahan and Alma S. Payne. Scribner 2.95

A very readable account of the scientific discoveries which have been made in the field of nutrition. Useful for the study of foods from early times to the present day.

The Stars by Clock and Fist by Henry Neely. Viking 4.00

A new approach to the study of stars. Using a clock face as a pattern for dividing the sky areas and your fist as a measure it is possible to determine the position of the stars.

The Story of Power by Edward Stoddard. Garden City 2.00

A dramatic presentation in both text and illustration showing how man has tamed the forces of nature. Lee Ames has given us some colorful pictures to accompany a brief but graphic story of the importance of engines and motors in today's living.

Man's Progress Through Invention

Electronics for Young People by Jeanne Bendick. Whittlesey House 2.75

An excellent approach to an important and constantly developing subject. The first half of the book deals in pure science while the latter half is given over to actual examples such as X-ray, florescent lighting, television and the like.

Famous Inventors and Their Inventions by Fletcher Pratt. Random House 2.75

The inventive genius of great men is presented here in a book which reads more like a story than a book of fact. Incidents which led up to a man's interest in a particular area will be an incentive to young people with an inventive turn of mind.

The First Book of Printing by Samuel and Beryl Epstein. Watts 1.95

The work of Gutenberg, Caxton and Franklin plus information on the modern methods of printing such as offset lithography and gravure give an adequate picture of the importance of printing.

Man and His Tools by William A. Burns. Whittlesey House 2.75

From a curator at New York Museum of Natural History comes a history of tools. The progress that has been made from early times to the present is discussed in a simple, direct style which will appeal to children of 9 years and up.

Steinmetz: Maker of Lightning by Sigmund A. Lavine. Dodd 3.00

The life story of a great scientist from his early days in Breslau through his years of achievement in the United States.

They Almost Made It by Fred Reinfeld. Crowell 2.75

"They" are the unsung scientists who did the groundwork for many inventions familiar to us today. The steam engine and the telegraph are examples of inventions which went through many preliminary stages before success was achieved.

World Book of Great Inventions by Jerome S. Meyer. World Pub. Co. 3.95

The history of invention is covered in broad categories by dividing the world into periods of progress. Detailed accounts of many inventions offer the older child well-illustrated material.

The members of the Women's National Book Association who prepare the excellent booklists in Mr. Hazard's column are:

Miss Lavinia Dobler, *Chairman,*
Librarian,
Scholastic Magazines
33 West 42nd Street, N. Y. C.

Mrs. Frances Lander Spain, Director,
Offices of Children's Services,
New York Public Library,
42nd St. & Fifth Avenue

Ellen Lewis Buell,
Book Review Editor, *Young People's Books*,
New York Times, New York

Iris Vinton,
Head of Publications,
Boys' Clubs of America,
381 Fourth Ave., N. Y.

Dorothy West,
Editor, *Standard Catalog Series*,
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Newark Public Library,
Newark, N. J.

In 1779, Juliana Smith, daughter of a New England clergyman, wrote to a cousin about the gathering around the hearth with young and old to hear the "two grandmothers telling tales of all the things they have seen and repeating those of the early years in New England, and even some in the Old England, which they had heard in their youth from their Elders. My father says it is a goodly custom to hand down all worthy deeds and traditions from Father to Son as the Israelites were commanded to do about the Passover and as the Indians have always done, because the Word that is spoken is remembered longer than one written."

I once taught the daughter of Bishop Oxnam in a junior high English class when I gave an assignment on family history, traditions, and customs dating back to grandparents and great-grandparents. Bishop Oxnam told his daughter he was glad she had the assignment, as he had never taken the time to tell her those things. The result was that she learned about a Scottish grandfather who left his home in Scot-

land with a promise to fill his mother's lap with goldpieces when he returned. He went to Africa, but instead of mining gold he patented some mining machinery which made the family fortune, and he did indeed return and fill his mother's lap with goldpieces. Most children would not have such spectacular history to relate, but they could be encouraged to think of all events as interesting, whether great or small. The danger in this assignment is hurting the sensitive child's feelings if he knows his family history contains something of which they are ashamed. In making the assignment, the teacher can ask lead questions such as "Were your grandparents born in this state? Can your mother and father tell you some stories about your grandparents or great-aunts and uncles? Tell us an interesting story that happened in your family history." The teacher should caution the children not to tell anything which the family would prefer to keep to themselves.

Louise Hovde Mortensen

Essay contests are undesirable. That's the opinion of a large number of principals, according to a study made by the National Association of Secondary School Principals. The principals found that the contests encourage plagiarism, do not contribute to effective learning, and are often backed by pressure groups

and commercial agencies. Their aims are too often misguided public service, better public relations, or sometimes to achieve tax relief. The principals suggest instead scholarship contests based on aptitude tests or photographic and art contests.

From the *NEA Journal*

The Educational Scene

Edited by WILLIAM A. JENKINS¹



William A. Jenkins

New films

A number of good new films have come to our attention in the past several months. We should like to mention just a few of those which we think have great possibilities and list the rest of them.

Contemporary Films has a group of nine animated fairy tales, the Reiniger Silhouette Films, six of which can be used in the primary grades. The six, just recently released, are "Cinderella," "The Gallant Little Tailor," "Puss in Boots," "Hansel and Gretel," "Thumbelina," and "Sleeping Beauty." Three earlier films are "Papageno," based on the Bird Catcher's Theme from Mozart's "The Magic Flute"; a humorous treatment of Bizet's "Carmen" (1933); and "Galathea," the old Pygmalion story of a statue's coming to life in classical Athens (1935). These last three films are suitable for high school and adult audiences.

The Silhouette Films are figures and designs made from free-hand scissor-cutting by Lottie Reiniger. Miss Reiniger, a pioneer in the development of the animated film, produced her first picture in Germany in 1919. She has produced 26 films, including a full-length production in 1926, "The Adventures of Prince Ahmed."

In 1952 she and her husband, Carl Koch, did a series of live shadow plays for the BBC-TV. They were well received. The six new releases followed this venture.

The figures in the films are all seen in silhouette, but this in no way detracts from them. Neither does animation rob the tales of any of their magic. On the other hand, live actors might be the point of interest and line drawings might be stiff. The shadow puppets are neither of these.

Miss Reiniger cuts her figures with great

speed and dexterity. The depths and tones in her backgrounds are made from using paper of varying thicknesses and transparency. Different figures are made for closeups and long shots.

All of the films may be ordered from Contemporary Films, Inc., 13 East 37th Street, New York 16. They are 16 mm., black and white, and run about 10 minutes each. Price: rental \$5; sale, \$50.

• • •

"A Desk for Billie," based on Billie Davis' autobiography, *I Was a Hobo Kid* (57 minutes; sound; color or black and white), is a heart-tugging film portraying the early life of a young child who had no hope, no laughter, no glimmer of life other than that provided by sympathetic teachers. In Billie's own words, "Wherever we went, no matter what we were, a school was always there, and teacher and a desk seemed to be always waiting just for me."

Billie's story, as many of you know, is of her life with her younger sister, two brothers, and migrant, ne'er-do-well parents. Billie says, "They called us migrant workers, transients. But we knew what we were. We were gypsies, peddlers, bums—rubber bums." That part of the autobiography which tells of her discovering schools, of teachers' finding a spark in her, has been put into this film, and the result is excellent. Some of my student teachers had moist eyes when they saw the film.

The film is suitable for PTA, in-service teachers, and teacher-trainees. Teachers are given fine tribute. It has had a wide circulation so it should be available from most film rental

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libraries. Prints are available from the NEA, 1201 Sixteenth Street, NW, Washington 6, D. C. Price: color, \$325; black and white, \$110.

* * *

For pure entertainment for all ages of children, we recommend UPA Productions' cartoons. Twelve titles are now available in this series, made available by Columbia Pictures, through its subsidiary, Screen Gems. All are about 10 minutes in length and in color.

First are two shorts about Gerald McBoing Boing, "Gerald McBoing Boing," and "Gerald McBoing Boing's Symphony" (we have also seen him recently on television). Gerald, as you know, is the boy who says "boing" instead of talking.

Next are three-starring, trouble-loving, myopic Mr. Magoo, for whom taste is not universal: "Bungled Bungalow," "Trouble Indemnity," and "Pink and Blue Blues."

"Willie the Kid" is a highly imaginative western; "Family Circus" takes a humorous look at rivalries within a family; and "The Oompahs" are a family of musical instruments, one of whom becomes a black-sheep jazzist. All three are delightful.

Finally, two children's literature pieces are available: Andersen's "The Emperor's New Clothes" and Bemelmans' "Madeline." The last one is our favorite.

UPA films are available from most large film libraries. One is Cinema Guild, 10 Fiske Place, Mt. Vernon, N. Y.

Other films

Boy of the Circus. 12 minutes. sound and color, or black and white. \$125 or \$68.75. For primary graders. Shows how circus people live together and work in harmony. Coronet Films, 65 E. Water Street, Chicago 1.

* * *

The Three Little Pigs (Background for Reading and Expression). 10 minutes. sound and color, or black and white. \$100 or \$55. Coronet Films.

Woolly the Lamb (Background for Reading and Expression). 11 minutes. sound and color, or black and white. \$100 or \$55. The first autumn lamb born is lonely and sets out on a journey to find a playmate. Finding none among the cows, pigs, turkeys, or dogs on the farm, he returns home and finds one—another baby lamb. Coronet Films.

* * *

Winkie, the Merry-Go-Round Horse. 10 minutes. sound and color, or black and white. \$100 or \$55. In a make-believe world, a boy and a merry-go-round horse share adventures. Coronet Films.

* * *

Circus Under the Stars. 14 minutes. Sound and color. Rental, \$6. A Polish puppet film telling in pantomime the story of what happens to a European, Chinese, American Indian, Hawaiian, and Negro child on a trip to the moon. Alsher Films, 1311 19th Street, N.W., Washington 6, D. C.

* * *

Fairness for Beginners. 11 minutes. sound and color, or black and white. \$100 or \$55. In Tommy's room, the "Farmer in the Dell" is not only a game, but starts a lesson in fairness. Whether the children are working in their room, playing outside, or taking turns at the drinking fountain, they all find ways of being fair. By sharing, taking turns, choosing fairly, and respecting the rights of others, they make theirs a happy class.

New filmstrips

Famous American Stories. Color. \$6 each. "The Gold Bug," "Tom Sawyer Whitewashes the Fence," "Evangeline," "The Man Without a Country," "The Great Stone Face," and "The Luck of Roaring Camp." Encyclopedia Britannica Films, Wilmette, Illinois.

* * *

Old Tales for Young Folks. color. \$4.75 each. "The Three Bears," "The Three Billy Goats Gruff," "The Three Spinners," "Sweet

Porridge," "The Three Little Pigs," and "The Gold Goose." The Jam Handy Organization.

* * *

American Folklore Heroes. 23 frames. black and white. \$3.50. Includes Paul Bunyan, Johnny Appleseed, Hiawatha, and Davy Crockett.

* * *

Hans Christian Andersen Stories. color. \$6 each. "The Tinder Box," "Thumbelina," "The Swineherd," "Hans Clodhopper," "The Little Mermaid," and "The Shepherdess and the Swineherd." Encyclopedia Britannica Films.

Good reading

"The Books We Got for Christmas" by Ellen Wilson, in *American Heritage* for December, is a colorful telling of the books that have delighted American children down through the years. In the group, which begins more than a century ago, Huck, Tom, Jo, Peter, Wendy, Alice, Pooh, Jim Hawkins, Br'er Rabbit, Hans Brinker, and the Peterkin family are still today beloved heroes. Others, such as Rollo, Elsie Dinsmore, the many Alger heroes, Frank Merriwell, the Oliver Optic heroes, Little Prudy, Dotty Dimple, and the Peppers now are history.

Miss Wilson does not say that the books of yesteryear were better; she merely gives the history. Except for two lapses, one to excoriate "vocabulary norms," and another deliberately to ignore the need for reinforcement in a child's learning to read, she is the capable and reminiscing historian. As such she finds that while many of the books that another generation received at Christmas time have passed from the shelves, a surprising number is still around. Stevenson is still popular; Howard Pyle's heroes still have their magnetic virility; Peter Pan, Alice, Dr. Dolittle, Br'er Rabbit, Edward Bear, the Cowardly Lion, and Rip Van Winkle still conjure magic; while Peter Rabbit, and Ratty, Mole, Toad, and Badger have fun and adventures and are children themselves.

Twelve pages of illustrations in color from

these books are reproduced as part of the article. We found it charming reading and looking.

Jane Addams award

The Story of the Negro (Knopf) by Arna Bontemps was awarded the Jane Addams Children's Book Award for 1956. The award is given by the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom to call the attention of the public to a distinguished literary work for children which helps to bring an understanding of other people and the many pressing problems of today.

The committee of the Jane Addams Children's Book Award decided unanimously to waive its ruling that only books originally published during the previous year would be eligible for consideration. *The Story of the Negro* was originally published in 1948 and brought up to date in 1955.

American Heritage

American Heritage, The Magazine of History, for December again caught our eye as one of the best journalistic efforts of our day. Both in their own personal, recreative reading and in supplying enriched source materials for very capable upper-grade pupils, teachers everywhere will find it a wonderful assortment of Americana.

Every article in this issue appealed to us, but two bear special mention, "The Books We Got for Christmas" by Ellen Wilson, discussed elsewhere in this column, and "The Man Who Discovered America" by Hisakazu Kaneko.

The Man Who Discovered America (Houghton Mifflin) is *American Heritage's* condensed book selection in this issue. It is the strange but true tale of Manjiro, the Japanese boy who was shipwrecked and brought to this country, the first of this sensitive people to visit our shores. In 1843, before Perry has opened up Japan, Manjiro landed in Bedford, Mass., saw, wondered, and recorded his impressions in word and picture. He returned to his country as our first Japanese (goodwill) ambassador with tales

of our wondrous land and its kindly people. The true story as told by Kaneko reads like a lyrical fairy tale.

Incidentally, a second book about Manjiro was published last year, *Voyager to Destiny* by Emily V. Warinner. Examples of Manjiro's art, some of which appear in *American Heritage*, enhance this latter story. American cities of the nineteenth century become pagoda-roofed, the Yankee whaling ships are staffed with Japanese figures, dwarfed trees stand in our gardens, and Old North Church appears as it might if it were in Tokyo.

Other noteworthy inclusions of the De-graphs taken in the United States; "The Girls Behind the Guns" by Fairfax Downey, the story of Molly Pitcher and Molly Corbin of the Continental Army; "The Great Bicycle Craze" by Fred C. Kelly; and "Portrait of a Yankee Skipper" by Archibald McLeish.

American Heritage is published every two months. It costs \$2.95 per issue, \$12 per year. Write to 551 Fifth Avenue, New York 17.

Miscellany

Bigger and Better Book Bazaars, a manual for planning and conducting school book bazaars, by Hardy R. Finch. Useful 34-page booklet for those planning book fairs and needing tips on securing publicity, press cooperation, ideas for exhibits and booths, and so on. Write to *Scholastic Teacher Magazine*, 33 West 42nd Street, New York 36.

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Librarians particularly will note an error in the volume number on page 3 of the January issue of *Elementary English*. The number should of course be XXXIV instead of XXXVI.

* * *

Books and Related Materials for Children and Young People: Selected Bibliographies and Guides, by Eleanor E. Ahlers. Curriculum Bulletin 167. School of Education, University of Oregon, Eugene. Nearly 200 annotated guides, lists, and sources of information on books for

children. All pertinent information is given. Excellently done. Price 50 cents.

There are a number of good titles available in back issues of the Bulletin—language arts, reading readiness, development of meaning, and so on. The Bulletin may also be purchased on a subscription basis. Twelve issues for \$7.50 in 1957.

* * *

"Story Guide to *Moby Dick*" by Joseph Mer-sand. Prepared especially for teachers, with discussion questions and suggested class projects. Joint Estimate of Current Entertainment Films, 28 West 44th Street, New York 36. Free.

* * *

Paperbound Books in Print (Fall-Winter 1956). Author and title index to 5400 paper-bound books, some for adolescents and children. R. W. Bowker Company, 62 West 45th Street, New York 36. \$2, or \$3 for the two yearly editions.

* * *

Teachers of Children Who Are Partially Seeing. Bulletin No. 4, Office of Education. Order from Superintendent of Documents, United States Government Printing Office, Washington 25, D. C. Price 30 cents.

Junior Literary Guild

The Junior Literary Guild selections for February are these:

For boys and girls 5 and 6 years old:

The Little Elephant. Photographs by Ylla. Text by Arthur Gregor. Harper, \$2.50.

For boys and girls 7 and 8 years old:

The Shoes Fit for a King by Helen Bill. Watts, \$2.75.

For boys and girls 9, 10, and 11 years old:

Cobbler's Knob by Eleanore M. Jewett. Doubleday, \$2.50.

For girls 12 to 16 years old:

Darcy's Harvest by Lynn Bronson. Doubleday, \$2.75.

For boys 12 to 16 years old:

Up Periscope by Robb White. Doubleday, \$2.75.

Carnival of Books

The "Carnival of Books," continuing its presentation of books by children's authors from other countries, will present these broadcasts featuring these authors from England:

- February 2: *The Hill of the Red Fox* (Dutton) by Allan Campbell McLean.
- February 9: *Lions in the Woodshed* (Whittlesey House) by Margaret Baker.
- February 16: *We Were There* (Houghton Mifflin) by Rhoda Power.
- February 23: *The Borrowers Afield* (Harcourt Brace) by Mary Norton.

Edison awards

The following National Mass Media Awards for 1956 have been made by the Thomas Alva Edison Foundation:

Moby Dick (a Motion Picture for Warner Brothers)—"The film best serving the national interest in 1956."

The Great Locomotive Chase (Walt Disney Studios)—"The best children's film for 1956."

"Wide Wide World (NBC)—"The television program best portraying America for 1956."

CBS Radio Workshop (CBS)—"The radio program best portraying America for 1956."

"Disneyland" (ABC)—"The best children's television program for 1956."

"No School Today" (ABC)—"The best children's radio program for 1956."

On the Threshold of Space (Twentieth Century-Fox)—"The best science film for youth in 1956."

Adventures in Science (CBS)—"The best science radio program for youth for 1956."

Station KRON-TV (San Francisco)—"The television station that best served youth in 1956."

Station WOWO (Fort Wayne, Indiana)—

"The radio station that best served youth in 1956."

Special citation to Station WNYC (New York City), for its annual Science Seminar.

The International Reading Association announces the publication of a 176 page volume of the proceedings of its first Annual Conference held in Chicago in 1956. The volume, called *Better Readers for Our Times*, is available from Scholastic Magazines, 33 W. 42nd Street, New York 36, and sells for \$2.00 per copy. The Association will hold its 1957 Conference May 10-11 at the Hotel New Yorker and Manhattan Center next door.

Workshop on evaluation of library materials for children

The Graduate Library School of the University of Chicago announces the second of three annual workshops on the Evaluation of Library Materials for Children, to be held July 31-August 2, 1957. The 1957 Workshop will deal with library materials in the language arts, and will cover audio-visual materials and their use as well as the materials of print.

The purpose of the Workshop is to introduce the principles underlying the evaluation and selection of materials for different grade levels and to demonstrate the application of the principles to the evaluation of actual materials. The wealth of new and outstanding materials in the University of Chicago Center for Children's Books, Curriculum Materials Laboratory, and Education Library will be available for examination by registrants in the Workshop.

Enrollment in the Workshop is open to (1) children's librarians in public libraries, and (2) school librarians and teachers in elementary and junior high schools. Registration will be limited so that small groups can be established for intensive work with the materials themselves on each of the several grade levels. Early application is therefore advisable. Although course credit is not given for attendance at the Workshop a memorandum testifying to successful

completion of the work will be supplied to teachers and school librarians requesting it.

For further information, write to the Graduate Library School, University of Chicago, Chicago 37, Illinois.

Readers' choice extends budget book service to elementary grades

Readers' Choice, a budget book service sponsored by Scholastic Magazines through which junior and senior high schools can obtain from a single source a variety of outstanding, 25-cent paperbound books, has extended its list of selections to include 16 additional books, all carefully chosen to suit the interests and ability levels of pupils in the fourth and fifth grades.

The 16 books for the elementary grades were selected by Readers' Choice in consultation with Mary Harbage, former Director of Elementary Education, Akron, Ohio, and Lilian Moore, well-known author of children's books and a former member of the Bureau of Educational Research, New York City Board of Education.

Here is the complete list of Readers' Choice books for Grades 4 and 5:

Green Turtle Mystery, Ellery Queen, Jr.
Horses, Samuel Cutler
Dennis the Menace, Hank Ketcham
How to Train Your Dog, Jeffrey Coe
Little Women, Louisa May Alcott
Trumpet Book of Laughs, H. J. Fletcher, comp.
Black Beauty, Anna Sewell
Cookie Cook Book, Mary Alden
Silver Saddles, Covelle Newcomb
Young Readers Bible Stories, Ruth Gray
Hobby Horse Hill, Lavinia R. David
Diving For Sunken Treasure, Harry E. Rieseberg
Robin Hood, Felix Sutton
Mystery of the Empty Room, Augusta H. Seaman
Range Rider, Felix Sutton

Moby Dick, H. Melville (re-written by Felix Sutton)

Readers' Choice offers discounts of 12% for minimum orders of twenty or more books (22c for 25c editions, 31c for 35c editions, 44c for 50c editions, postpaid). A Teacher Memo prepared by Miss Harbage and Miss Moore for use in connection with the elementary grades book list may be obtained by writing to: Readers' Choice, 33 West 42nd Street, New York 36, N. Y.

Speech examination

The Board of Examiners of the New York City Department of Education is planning to hold an examination for license as assistant director of speech improvement. Applications will be received from January 24 to May 3, 1957. The written test will be held during the week of May 27. Inquiries should be addressed to Dr. Jay E. Greene, Chairman of Committee on Speech Licenses, at 110 Livingston Street, Brooklyn 1, New York.

Language arts conferences

Colleges throughout the country report that the following conferences in various phases of the language arts will be held this year. They are scheduled for March through November, 1957.

This listing was compiled by a committee (Ralph C. Staiger, chairman) of the National Conference on Research in English from a part of a research studies summary which will appear in a spring issue of *Elementary English*.

March 29-30, 1957. Third Annual Conference on the Teaching of English, Yale University, Approximate attendance 250, Mr. Edward S. Noyes, Director, Master of Arts in Teaching Program, Yale University, New Haven, Connecticut.

April 12-13, 1957. State University of Iowa Spring Conference for English Teachers, State University of Iowa and Iowa Council of Teachers of English, Approximate at-

- tendance 80, Mr. John C. Gerber, English Department, State University of Iowa, Iowa City, Iowa.
- April 20, 1957. Reading Workshop, South Carolina Reading Council, South Carolina State College, Approximate attendance 500, Miss Nettie P. Parler, Executive Secretary, South Carolina State College, Orangeburg, South Carolina.
- April 26-27, 1957. Texas State Joint Committee on the Integration of the Teaching of English in High School and College, Statewide organization directing district workshop conferences, Approximate attendance 1,000, Miss Autrey Nell Wiley, Chairman, 110 West College Avenue, Denton, Texas.
- June , 1957. Reading Clinic, Pacific University, Meredith McVicker, Forest Grove, Oregon.
- June 3-15, 1957. Language Arts Workshop, Southeastern Louisiana College, Dr. P. B. Allison, Southeastern High School, Hammond, Louisiana.
- June 5-15, 1957. Elementary School Workshop, University of Kansas, Approximate attendance 125, Dr. Oscar M. Haugh, School of Education, University of Kansas, Lawrence, Kansas.
- June 5-21, 1957. English Workshop on Current Trends in English for English Teachers in Elementary Grades, High School, and College, Texas State College for Women, Approximate attendance 25 to 50, Miss Autrey Nell Wiley, English Department, Texas State College for Women, Denton, Texas.
- June 5-July 14, 1957. Workshop in English: Problems in the Teaching of Composition and Literature in the Public Schools, North Texas State College and National Council of Teachers of English, Dr. E. S. Clifton, North Texas State College, Denton, Texas.
- June 10-14. Seventeenth Annual Reading Conference, Mississippi Southern College, Approximate attendance 500, Dr. Ralph C. Staiger, Station A, Hattiesburg, Mississippi.
- June 17-21, 1957. Reading Workshop, Oklahoma Agricultural and Mechanical College, Approximate attendance 125, Miss Ida T. Smith, School of Education, Oklahoma A & M College, Stillwater, Oklahoma.
- June 17-25, 1957. Workshop in Reading, State College of Washington, Dr. Zeno B. Katterle, Dean, School of Education, State College of Washington, Pullman, Washington.
- June 17-28, 1957. Thirteenth Annual Conference and Course on Reading, University of Pittsburgh, Approximate attendance 300-500, Dr. Donald F. Cleland, Pittsburgh 13, Pennsylvania.
- June 18-21, 1957. Workshop for Teachers of High School English, Ohio University, Approximate attendance 50, Dr. Edward Stone, Ohio University, Athens, Ohio.
- June 18-28, 1957. Workshop in Reading, Indiana State Teachers College, Approximate attendance 40, Dr. Jacob Cobb, Indiana State Teachers College, Terre Haute, Indiana.
- June 21-25, 1957. Speech Readiness Workshop, Bradley University, Approximate attendance 50-100, Dr. Clara K. Mawhinney, Speech Clinic, Bradley University, Peoria, Illinois.
- June 24-28, 1957. Eighteenth Annual Reading Conference, The Pennsylvania State University, Approximate attendance 300, Dr. George Murphy, Reading Clinic, Pennsylvania State University, University Park, Pennsylvania.
- June 24-July 10, 1957. Working Conference in Reading, East Tennessee State College, Approximate attendance 20, Mrs. Allie Lou Felton Gilbreath, East Tennessee State College, Johnson City, Tennessee.
- June 24-July 13, 1957. Workshop in Directing the Speech Program, Fort Hays Kansas State College, Approximate attendance 40,

- Mr. Albert D. Dunavan, Fort Hays State College, Hays, Kansas.
- June 29-July 19, 1957. College of Education Conference, West Virginia University, Approximate attendance 300, Mr. Eddie C. Kennedy, College of Education, West Virginia University, Morgantown, West Virginia.
- July 1-3, 1957. Twentieth Annual Reading Conference, University of Chicago, Approximate attendance 1000-1400, Dr. Helen M. Robinson, 5835 Kimbark Avenue, Chicago, Illinois.
- July, 1957. Writer's Workshop including Workshop in Technical Writing, Tufts University Summer School, Mr. John Holmes, Tufts University, Medford 55, Massachusetts.
- July 11-12, 1957. University of Missouri Reading Conference, University of Missouri, Approximate attendance 600, Dr. A. S. Artley, 213 Hill, University, Missouri.
- July 15-26, 1957. Bilingual (Spanish) Education Workshop, Adams State College, Approximate attendance 40, Dr. Keats McKinney, Adams State College, Alamosa, Colorado.
- July 16-August 19, 1957. Traveling English Workshop, Texas State College for Women, Approximate attendance 36, Miss Eleanor James, English Department, Texas State College for Women, Denton, Texas.
- July 23-24, 1957. Conference on the Teaching of English, University of Wisconsin, Approximate attendance 200, Dr. John R. Searles, Associate Professor of Education and English, 367 Bascom Hall, Madison 6, Wisconsin.
- July 28-August 9, 1957. Reading Workshop, Adams State College, Approximate attendance 40, Dr. Keats McKinney, Adams State College, Alamosa, Colorado.
- July 29-August 2, 1957. Secondary English Teachers' Workshop, Kent State University, Approximate attendance 55, Dr. Florence Beall, English Department, Kent State University, Kent, Ohio.
- July 29-August 16, 1957. Language Arts Workshop, University of Chicago, Approximate attendance 50-75, Miss Mildred C. Letton, 5835 Kimbark, Chicago 37, Illinois.
- August 5-16, 1957. Workshop on Reading, Department of Teacher Education, Michigan State University, Approximate attendance 50, Dr. Byron Van Roekel, Michigan State University, East Lansing, Michigan.
- September 22-24, 1957. Conference of New England Reading Association, New Hampshire Committee of New England Reading Association, Approximate attendance 900, Mr. Austin Olney, Chairman Planning Committee, University of New Hampshire, Durham, New Hampshire.
- October 11, 1957. English Conference, Kent State University, Approximate attendance 600, Mr. Thomas F. Marshall, English Department, Kent State University, Kent, Ohio.
- November 15, 1957. Annual Conference of the Pacific Speech Association, Pacific Speech Association (a branch of the Speech Association of America), Approximate attendance 200, Mr. A. D. Breneman, Punahou School Campus, Honolulu, Hawaii.
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- The Third Annual Conference on Reading has been scheduled for June 24-28, 1957, in cooperation with The Betts Reading Clinic, of Haverford, Pennsylvania, it was announced by Dr. Walter G. Prausnitz, Head, English Department, at Concordia College, Moorhead, Minnesota.
- The theme of the 1957 Institute is "Prevention and Correction of Reading Difficulties." In charge of the program are Dr. Emmett A. Betts, Director, and Miss Carolyn M. Welch, Supervisor of In-Service Teacher Education.



May Hill Arbuthnot

BOOKS FOR CHILDREN

Edited by MAY HILL ARBUTHNOT

Mrs. Arbuthnot is well-known as a writer and lecturer in the field of children's literature. She is the author of CHILDREN AND BOOKS (Scott, Foresman, 1947) and three anthologies, combined in the single volume, THE ARBUTHNOT ANTHOLOGY (Scott, Foresman, 1953).

MARGARET MARY CLARK reviews books of science, social studies, and biography. Miss Clark is head of the Lewis Carroll Room, Cleveland Public Library, and a member of the committee for ADVENTURING WITH BOOKS (National Council of Teachers of English, 1956).

Magic Old and New

The Little Bookroom. By Eleanor Farjeon. Illustrated by Edward Ardizzone. Oxford, 1956. \$3.00 (6-13).

For a well deserved tribute to Eleanor Farjeon's unique contribution to children's literature read in *The Horn Book*, October, 1956, "Eleanor Farjeon's 'Room With a View'" by Frances Clarke Sayers, herself a distinguished writer. *The Little Bookroom* is a collection of twenty-seven favorite short stories by Miss Farjeon, illustrated with exquisitely perceptive line drawings by Edward Ardizzone. In her "Author's Note" Miss Farjeon explains that the little bookroom was the special place where outcast books came to rest in their book-crowded house. These books yielded special treasure for young readers and the picture of near-sighted "Nellie" with her nose in a book is exactly as she describes herself in *Portrait of a Family*.

In these stories, what the author calls her "muddle of fiction and fact, fantasy and truth" is completely spellbinding. Each child whether he hears these tales read or reads them for himself will have his special favorites—

the strange "Clumber Pup" perhaps, or "Pennyworth" a gem, or the rich fable that opens the book, "The King and the Corn," or a dozen others. That rare gift to the storyteller, "Elsie Piddock Skips in Her Sleep" is missing, but available in *Told Under the Magic Umbrella*. All in all, *The Little Bookroom* is a choice collection that exemplifies the power and beauty of Eleanor Farjeon's style. She and our own Ruth Sawyer are enchanting practitioners of that oldest and most intimate of the arts—the art of storytelling.

A

The Enchanted Schoolhouse. By Ruth Sawyer. Illustrated by Hugh Troy. Viking, 1956. \$2.50. (9-12).

Young Brian Boru Gallagher was noted, not for his courage but for his knowledge. So he was the very boy to



Margaret Mary Clark

study the magazines his uncle sent from America. And the wonder of those pictures possessed him entirely. There were snowy white stoves for cooking, with never a sign of turf or coal. And there were white closet-things that opened up



The Enchanted Schoolhouse

and showed more eatables than any Irish lad had ever dreamed existed. What now, I ask you, could one small boy take to America to show them the beauty and greatness of Ireland? That might be a poser for some, but for a smart boy like Brian Boru it was easy. He just caught a wee Irish fairyman, clapped him in a teapot and took him along.

At first, America seemed to be as full of magic as Brian had expected. And his uncle and pretty young aunt made him warmly welcome. But when book-loving Brian saw the dirty, dilapidated, dismal schoolhouse where he was expected to go, he was horrified. He was homesick too for his own school with its yard all gay with flowers and everything neat and pretty. There the story begins. Brian pressed the fairyman into service and between them they turned Lobster Cove topsy turvy, did strange things with the children, had the grownups well nigh frantic and spirited the miserable old schoolhouse completely away. Their efforts were not entirely appreciated by the natives, but before these two sons of Ireland were on their way back to their native turf, a new schoolhouse was underway for Lobster Cove.

An allegory for grownups, no doubt, but

a gay, spirited story for the children! Ruth Sawyer writes with a twinkle in her eyes that carries over to her words. But always there is an emphasis on the things of the spirit. Blessings on her and may her magic never lessen.

A

The Blue-Nosed Witch. By Margaret Embry. Pictures by Carl Rose. Holiday, 1956. \$2.00. (6-10).

Light as a witch's broomstick, this is the drollest bit of Halloween foolery we have seen. Don't forget it next year, "when pumpkins stare." Blanche, it seems, was a very young and irresponsible witch but she possessed a talented nose which could glow a marvelous bright blue in the dark. Cruising around one night on her broomstick, with Brockett, her black cat, rid-



The Blue-Nosed Witch

ing in the rear, Blanche saw a strange procession. She did not know it was Halloween but she saw a tall witch leading an odd procession of ghosts, cowboy, pirate and gypsy. Blanche thought the witch might be a friend of hers, so she joined them. She was wrong, of course, but her glowing nose proved to be such a hit that she went along with the tricks-or-treat procession. The children had never had such an evening nor such a trick as Blanche's super-colossal nose. They were showered with treats and when they encountered one mean old somebody, Blanche and Brockett went into action in a big way. It was frightening but glorious. Blanche flew back to the company of her own

"Scurry 13" and soothed all the witches by passing out the most elegant jelly doughnuts from her filled bag. Incandescent noses are not to be procured at the Dime Store but maybe Blanche will want to try "tricks-or-treat" next year.

A

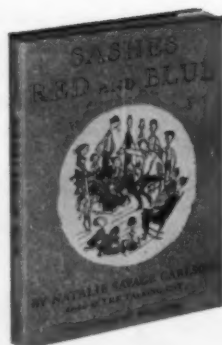
The Flying Carpet. Adapted and illustrated by Marcia Brown. Scribner's, 1956. \$3.00 (6-10).

In text and illustration *The Flying Carpet* surpasses anything Marcia Brown has done before, even her Caldecott Medal book, *Cinderella*. Retold from Richard Burton's translation of *The Arabian Nights*, the story of *The Flying Carpet* has much the same movement, color and beauty of the pictures. For these, Miss Brown has obviously found inspiration in Persian art. Her illustrations glow with jewel-like colors and move with a swift lightness and grace that somehow carry the eye out and beyond the pages. This is not only the most beautiful picture book of the year, but the most fascinating illustrations since Dulac. They have indeed a fierce energy that his lacked. The beauty of the text makes it ideal for reading aloud and it will hold the attention of older children than the publishers have suggested. If this book does not have the children begging for more stories from *The Arabian Nights*, we miss our guess. And let's hope the gifted Miss Brown hears their call.

A

Sashes Red and Blue. By Natalie Savage Carlson. Pictures by Rita Fava. Harper, 1956. \$2.50. (8-12).

Natalie Carlson has retold nine delightful Canadian folk tales. There are tall tales, legends, fables and some family tales like the three about little Nichet Le Blanc. The Le Blancs, we are told, are as numerous in Canada as the Smiths in the United States, but when was there ever a Smith, after the first John Smith, who could match the Le Blancs for stories? Here in these tales are the *fi-follet*, the *lutin* and the *loup garou*, fairy creatures fit to scare



children into good behavior, but here used so lightly and humorously that they would not scare a toddler. "The Marionettes," referring to the Northern lights when they dance, is the grimmest of the tales but humorous too, for big Polycarp with his huge, roaring voice sang down the marionettes and a *loup garou* as well. "Sashes Red and Blue" is amusing and so is "The Hard Master" but the three Nichet stories are especially choice. When finally, Nichet began to use the Le Blanc talent and told a whopper of his own invention, he was severely reprimanded. "But what is the difference," he asked, "between an untruth and a story?" Papa tried to explain that an untruth is told seriously but when a man tells a story—"he waves his arms *ca* and rolls his eyes *ca*." Then all people know that they can believe it or not—as they wish." Grandmère explained how "only people as smart as ours" could make up *fi-follets*, *lutins* and *loup garous*, but added tartly, "But as far as I can see, they are only fancy untruths." However, Nichet was then allowed to tell his whopper in good Le Blanc storytelling style. These nine tales will be fun for young readers and for those too young to read but not too young to listen.

A

Scandinavian Legends and Folk Tales. By Gwyn Jones. Illustrated by Joan Kiddell-Monroe. Oxford, 1956. \$3.50. (8-12).

This is the sixth book in that invaluable series of *Oxford Myths and Legends*. The

twenty-four stories are told by the same writer who compiled the Welsh tales. These from the Norse are in four groups that range from the simple nursery tales of "The Cat on the Dover-fell" and "The Three Billy Goats Gruff," the more mature "Giant Who Had No Heart in His Body," to the less familiar stories of "Kings and Heroes." Mr. Jones has a wonderfully rich style which makes his collections admirable for storytelling, reading aloud, or silent reading and rereading. The illustrations in icy blue greens with gray and touches of black are imaginative and compelling. Especially moving are the pictures for "The Wild Swans" and the frontispiece of the lassie, riding through mountains and forests on the back of the huge polar bear. A beautiful book in text and format.

A

Animal stories

Desert Dog. By Jim Kjelgaard. Holiday House, 1956. \$2.75. (12-16).

Trading Jeff and His Dog. By Jim Kjelgaard. Dodd, 1956. (12-16).

Two books by Jim Kjelgaard are a special bonus for 1956, and older children will welcome both stories.

Desert Dog drives home the callous brutality of vacationers who every year abandon cats and dogs to life in the wilderness. In this



story Tawney, a greyhound, was lost in the cruelest of all wastelands—the desert of our Southwest country. There his courage and speed helped him to survive hunger, thirst, ravenous

wild beasts and a pack of killer dogs. These, poor outcasts, had been dropped from speeding automobiles in the Arizona desert and had banded together in a struggle to survive. Tawney's strength and intelligence helped him to fight them, outwit them, and in the end to acquire a master who had followed the struggle from afar and knew a good dog when he saw one. It is a grim story of continuous fights, written in Mr. Kjelgaard's usual absorbing style but more predictable than is usual with his stories.

Trading Jeff, the peddler, is as gay as he is footloose. But to his surprise he who keeps clear of all ties, acquires an enormous dog and a small, grim boy intent on avenging his father's death. Pal, the amiable and intelligent hound, and Dan the bitter ten-year-old, would never have been Jeff's choice of companions, but he does his best by both of them. In the remote wilds of the mountains, the plot thickens rapidly and the gallery of characters expands to include a lively old woman who can stitch a handsome tapestry and handle a gun as well as small Dan. The story involves a mystery, some sinister and elusive villains and a dog that plays a major and hilarious part in the solution of the mystery and the survival of Jeff and Dan. The dialogue is Kjelgaard at his best. The action is sometimes exceedingly funny and often grim. Dan is a loveable boy and Jeff one of the gayest of story-book peddlers.

A

Dipper of Copper Creek. By John and Jean George. Illustrated by Jean George. Dutton, 1956. \$3.50. (11-16).

Books by John George, zoologist and Ph.D., and his artist-wife, Jean, are distinguished by reason of their superb illustrations, excellent prose style and scientifically authentic information. They are for young naturalists who take their bird and animal studies seriously. This book carries two stories, the story of a boy and a bird family. Overly-guided young Doug thought he had come to the ghost town of Gothic, high up in the Rockies, to spend the

summer prospecting with Grandpa. But he had not been there long before he discovered what had kept his grandfather in those high places, mostly solitary but content. It was not the meager amount of gold he mined. It was the spell of those high peaks, unspoiled forests, rumbling streams, and all the birds and beasts that shared his life. The spell of the wilderness took hold of Doug too, as he began to explore



Dipper of Copper Creek

the country and watch the ways of the creatures he encountered. Especially he was fascinated with a rare water bird, the ouzel or dipper. It is the only bird that can survive the violent waterfalls of mountain streams, from the Himalayas to the Rockies. Doug saw it first under water. Then, the bird came up from the bottom, floated with the current of the rushing stream, flew again, flashing and dipping, dived under the water, apparently using its wings to fly, row, or steer. It was incredible. This marked the beginning of Doug's summer-long observation of the dipper, *Cinclus* and his mate, Teeter. The story of the birds' triumphs and tragedies and Doug maturing into a man under Grandpa's rugged tutelage make the story. The people are not as alive in this story as they were in *Meph, the Pet Skunk*, where the family conflict was fully drawn. But the birds and beasts that inhabit the remote country of the high mountains, especially the water ouzels, are extraordinarily alive both in the text and wonderful illustrations.

A

The Horse of Hurrican Hill. Written and illustrated by C. W. Anderson. Macmillan, 1956. \$2.75. (8-12).

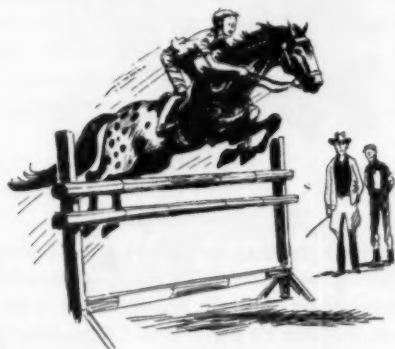
Here is a wish fulfillment story from first to last, a bit too good to be true, but pleasant going all the way. Young Stephen was still grieving over the death of his pony, when what should he find in the stable one morning, but a half-grown, thoroughbred colt. He realized at once that it must have escaped from the fire at the nearby Albemarle Stables, some months ago. But what he didn't know was that the colt had been living with a herd of deer and had learned to run like the wind and jump with the best of them. After Stephen had gentled the timid creature and consulted an expert horseman, the two of them led the colt back to Mrs. Albemarle. She recognized him and told Stephen about his distinguished pedigree. But when she sensed Stephen's love for horses and his skill, she put the colt and his papers in the boy's hands. The story of patient training follows and the climax comes, of course, when Stephen and Hurricane win their first silver cup which Stephen presents to Mrs. Albemarle. Mr. Anderson has told the same story before, in greater detail. But he tells it well and his drawings are a delight.

A

Heads Up. By Patsey Gray. Illustrated by Leonard Shortall. Coward, 1956. \$2.75. (8-12).

Orphaned Peggy, underfed and skinny, had a way with horses that enabled her to earn a meager living and keep clear of her foster home where she was not wanted. Peggy rode Mr. MacGrudgeon's jumpers at fairs and helped old Step, the groom, with the stable chores. MacGrudgeon was a sour, bullying man, hard on his horses and his help. But Peggy put up with him because of her love for Chief, a big temperamental horse she had gentled and trained. The story gives young readers some of the thrills and glamour of the show rings, glimpses behind-the-scenes in the lives of the performers, and insight into the crooked and often cruel tricks of a man like MacGrudgeon on the one

hand and the happy trailer life of a family like the Tuckers in contrast. They are trick riders who become interested in lonely young Peggy. She and Chief are almost broken by one of Mac's miserable tricks, but the near-tragedy



Heads-Up

leads to a wonderful solution of Peggy's problems and her need for a family. She and Chief are taken into the Tucker act and both find a home, security, and work they can do. The story is full of horse lore and fair people. After reading it children will feel very knowledgeable when they attend their next State or County Fair.

A

Ancient and Modern Desert Indians

Hah-Nee of the Cliff Dwellers. By Mary Buff.

Illustrated by Conrad Buff. Houghton, 1956.

\$3.00. (8-11).

At the Four Corners Area, where Utah, Colorado, New Mexico, and Arizona meet, the



Hah-Nee of the Cliff Dwellers

impressive ruins of cliff dwellings are still to be seen. But what happened to the people who fled their Great City some six hundred years ago? Anthropology explains this ancient mystery on the basis of the long drought which began in 1276 and lasted twenty-four years. Raiding Ute enemies, less skilful in raising corn, hastened the end, it is thought.

These are the threads with which Mary Buff has woven her story of Hah-Nee, the boy, and his family. Hah-Nee was not a flathead like all the children of the tribe, because he was a foundling Ute baby that his family had rescued. Now that times were bad, the tribe had turned on him, and only the protection of Wupa, the oldest and wisest man in the tribe, stood between the boy and persecution or death. The increasing shortage of food and water and the death of Wupa forced Hah-Nee's family to flee at last from the Great City where their ancestors had lived in safety and plenty for long years. Yet this is not a sad story, for they do find a better land where corn grows richly and Hah-Nee is safe.

This is a detailed and convincing picture of the cliff dwellers' way of life, their skills, customs, beliefs and fears. And Conrad Buff has made some of his finest pictures in glorious colors, for this is the country he knows and loves.

A

Navaho Sister. By Evelyn Sibley Lampman. Il-

lustrated by Paul Lantz. Doubleday, 1956.

\$2.75. (8-12).

Problems of the modern Indian child coming into the government schools is sympathetically developed in this story of Sad Girl. To have no family, no clan is to be an object of pity among the Navahos. Sad Girl hated her name because it was a continual reminder that she and grandmother were alone in the world. And then, to leave grandmother and go to the reservation boarding school was the final tragedy. But to her surprise Sad Girl found the school wonderful from the first day, especially when she was allowed to choose a new name

and became Rose Smith. Rose's experiences show how strange our clothes, foods, shower baths, tooth brushes, and other commonplaces of modern life can seem to an Indian child. Some, like Rose, adjusted quickly. Others, like Isobel, suffered deeply and in silence. Fortunately Rose found out about Isobel and could



Navaho Sister

help her. But Rose's great triumph was earning enough money to buy the beloved Grandmother material for a glorious red velveteen blouse. The end of the story brings a happy surprise for Rose, Grandmother, and Isobel. The activities and festivals of the school, and the ups and downs of the individual children make this much like other boarding school stories, but with the special background of Southwest Indian children and their problems of adjustment to the white man's ways.

A

Biography

Mr. Justice Holmes. By Clara Ingram Judson. Illustrated by Robert Todd. Follett, 1956. \$3.50. (12-up).

The subject of Justice Holmes may not have the appeal of more colorful characters in American history for younger readers, but his activities as a jurist during thirty years in the United States Supreme Court contributed greatly to the progress of the nation. His biography gives a sensitive description of the shy boy who longed

to measure up and win the approval of his famous father, describes his part in the Civil War in which he was three times wounded,



Mr. Justice Holmes

and depicts the long struggle to make a place for himself as a lawyer. The book is attractive with numerous drawings, and is similar in format to the author's presidential biographies of *Lincoln*, *Jefferson*, *Roosevelt*, and *Washington*.

C

Paderewski. By Charlotte Kellogg. Viking, 1956. \$3.50. (12-up)

One of the most distinguished biographies of 1956 tells of the great pianist and patriot, Ignace Jan Paderewski, who grew up in the shadow of a divided Poland. As a gifted but improperly taught small boy, Paderewski had much to overcome before he became an internationally known and successful musician. After World War I he willingly sacrificed his personal career to lead the newly restored Poland back to its place among nations.

The author, who knew him for many years, conveys the spirit of a great and humble man with rare perception. Her biography offers a good background of Paderewski's time, and of the great aid he received from President Wilson, Colonel House, and the American people in achieving his dream of a free Poland, only to find it threatened again before his death in 1941.

C

Mozart. By Manuel Komroff. Illustrated with decorations by Warren Chappell and with photographs. Knopf, 1956. \$3.00. (10-14). Written in commemoration of the 200th

anniversary of Mozart's birth, this is an absorbing biography of a great genius, and a sorry indictment of the age in which he lived for its indifference to musical talent of a high order. The little boy who learned to play at four and compose at five, and who traveled about Europe with his sister as wonder children, rarely knew anything but grinding poverty and relentless work during his brief life. His story is sensitively and sympathetically told, and



Mozart

Manuel Komroff gives considerable emphasis to Mozart's writing of his great musical compositions. Children who read the biography will gain insight into the life of an artist dedicated to his work despite the lack of recognition from his fellow men. C

Trail Blazer of the Seas. By Jean Lee Latham. Illustrated by Victor Mays. Houghton Mifflin, 1956. \$2.75. (11-15).

As in her Newbery prize biography *Carry On, Mr. Bowditch*, Jean Latham has chosen another of the little known heroes of navigation for her subject. In the early 1800's, when the length of sea voyages to their destinations was varied and unequal, Matthew Fontaine Maury, a lieutenant in the U.S. navy, conceived the idea of drawing up wind and current charts that would make such journeys more predictable. Years of his life were spent in gaining the co-operation of sea captains who would supply him with information that in the final analysis would be helpful to all seamen. His tremendous contributions resulted in a belated recognition

*Trail Blazer of the Seas*

which offers a satisfying climax to this vivid story of a Tennessee farm boy who achieved a naval career in spite of parental disapproval. Generously illustrated with fine black-and-white sketches. C

The Empress Josephine: From Martinique to Malmaison. By Marquerite Vance. Illustrated by Nedda Walker. Dutton, 1956. \$2.75. (12-16).

The spoiled self-willed fifteen-year-old Josephine who left her island home for France and a family-arranged marriage little dreamed that she would play a part in two dramatic epochs in French history. During the French Revolution she was imprisoned as an aristocrat and

*The Empress Josephine:
From Martinique to Malmaison*

her first husband was executed. With the rise of the new Republic, Josephine contracted a loveless marriage with Napoleon, and won and lost a thorne. Mrs. Vance tells the story of the Empress with the same warmth and charm and qualities of characterization that have marked her other royal biographies: *Marie Antoinette*, *Lady Jane Grey*, and *Elizabeth Tudor*.

C

Ferdinand Magellan. By Ronald Welch. Illustrated by William Stobbs. Criterion, 1956. \$3.00 (11 and up).

Magellan, the great voyager, who was killed before he realized the greatness of his contribution, is introduced in a fine biography written by a well-known British author. Because Magellan's early life is not recorded, Mr. Welch describes the early years against a background of the times in which he lived. After his explorations began, there is a first hand account written by one of the seamen who shared his journeys. This and a scholarly group of references are the sources on which this colorful biography is based. The author captures the bleakness and discomforts of the journeys through unknown seas, the dangers from Magellan's own frightened or jealous seamen, and the fears of treachery from tribes who were seeing white men for the first time. The book should make the achievements of early explorers really come alive for modern young readers. William Stobbs' black-and-white drawings have vitality and character.

C

Science

Here Come the Lions. By Alice E. Goudey. Illustrated by Garry MacKenzie. Scribner, 1956. \$2.25. (7-10).

Here Come the Whales. By Alice E. Goudey. Illustrated by Garry MacKenzie. Scribner, 1956. \$2.50. (7-10).

Both of these titles follow the pattern of earlier books in the series, all of which have value for younger readers and slow over-age readers. There is extensive information in these compact simply told accounts. The book about

lions includes the African lion and the American puma, with brief mention of others in the cat family. *Here Come the Whales* includes the blue and sperm whales, and the story of whale hunting past and present.

C

All About Snakes. By Bessie M. Hecht. Illustrated by Rudolf Freund. Random House, 1956. \$1.95. (9-12).

Written in an easy informal style, this is an entertaining introduction to reptiles: where and how they live, eat and breed, size and life span of many types, dangerous and harmless snakes. The author, formerly on the staff of the American Museum of Natural History, includes many personal experiences in observing and handling snakes, which add to the appeal of the book. Illustrated with black-and-white drawings.

C

Wonders of the Aquarium. By Sigmund A. Lavine. Illustrated by Ernest H. Hart. Dodd Mead, 1956. \$2.50. (11-up.)

Here is an excellent book on starting the aquarium and choosing the tropical fish, plants and scavengers to equip it. An entertaining history of early aquariums serves as an introduction to this practically presented well illustrated book which is a real contribution in its field.

C

The World We Live In: Special Edition for Young Readers. By the Editorial Staff of Life and Lincoln Barnett. Text adapted by Jane Werner Watson. Illustrated. Simon Schuster, 1956. \$4.95. (10 and up).

Adapted from the adult title of the same name, this edition offers a scientific approach to the origin of earth and life, the forces which change sea and land, special areas such as barrens, forests, deserts, and coral reefs; and other planets in relation to the earth. The text is absorbing in its presentation, and the outstanding illustrations made from color photographs and paintings are large in size and rich in beauty and detail.

C

The Worlds Around Us. By Patrick Moore. Illustrated by A. L. Helm and the author. Abelard Schuman, 1956. \$2.50 (11 and up).

As a Fellow of the Royal Astronomical Society, Patrick Moore offers a sound scientific background in his approach to "the other worlds which form a part of our solar system" with space travel as the ultimate objective. He considers the known information in regard to each planet and its future potentials for space travel. The book is well presented, and offers excellent material for the study of planets, both in content and illustrations. C

Winter Tree Birds. By Lucy Ozone and John Hawkinson. Illustrated by the authors. Albert Whitman, 1956. \$2.00. (5-7).

A useful addition to primary winter units is this story of five birds who survive the winter months by eating the insect eggs and cocoons on trees. The material is simply presented with very brief descriptive information on each of the five birds, the chickadee, tufted titmouse, downy woodpecker, whitebreasted nuthatch, and brown creeper. Format is in picture-book style with illustrations in delicate color.

C

The Makers of Honey. By Mary Geisler Phillips. Illustrated by Elizabeth Burckmyer, Crowell, 1956. \$2.50. (10-14).

From earliest recorded knowledge of bees and bee-keepers to today, this outstanding book covers a wide field of information on the honey bee and its usefulness. The anatomy of the bee, life in the hives, the gathering of honey, the "language" of bees, their value to man as pollinators and a wealth of other material based on the careful observations of authorities in the field are included. The book is a distinctive addition on the subject, written in lively style, illustrated with fine black-and-white diagrams and drawings, and well indexed.

C

The Story of Rocks. By Dorothy Shuttlesworth. Illustrated by Su Zan Swain. Garden City, 1956. \$2.50. (9-14).

The former editor of Junior Natural History magazine has collaborated with a nature artist to produce an informative guide for young rock collectors. In addition to good information on how to start collections there is a general introduction to the three basic types and brief descriptions of a variety of rocks and minerals. The illustrations in color are of high calibre. An index would have added to the usefulness of this attractive book. C

Jim Thorpe, Indian Athlete. By Guernsey Van Riper, Jr. Illustrated by William Riley, Bobbs-Merrill, 1956. \$1.75. (8-10).

Undersized Jim Thorpe and his twin, Charlie, busy with hunting and playing, could little visualize a future that would end their close companionship. After Charlie's death while still at the Oklahoma reservation school, Jim Thorpe went from one athletic honor to another, starring in the Olympics and playing



baseball and football. In 1950 he was voted greatest male athlete in fifty years. The book does give insight into the reservation schooling of today's Indians, and the stirring achievements of Jim Thorpe are familiar to many of the younger readers. C

What Does A Begin With? Written by Nancy Dingman Watson. Illustrated by Aldren A. Watson. Knopf, 1956. \$2.50. (5-7).

Beautiful bright pictures of life on a small farm are allied with slight, amusing text as Peter thinks of objects and animals on the farm for each letter of the alphabet as recited by his little sister Linda. The pictures achieve a kind of panoramic view of the life and activities which conveys to children a real feeling of what life on a farm is like. C

Ride On the Wind. Told by Alice Dalgliesh.
Illustrated by Georges Schreiber, Scribner,
1956. \$2.75. (7-10).



Ride On the Wind

Young children will be fascinated by this moving story of Charles Lindbergh who from his earliest years wanted to be an aviator. There is a vivid description of his solitary ocean

flight culminating in the rousing welcome at Le Bourget. Illustrated in rich color, this introductory biography, which places its emphasis on aviation, should be a welcome addition to transportation units. The easy reading content suggests an additional use with over-age slow readers. C

People of the Snow: Eskimos of Arctic Canada.

By Wanda Tolboom. Illustrated with photographs, and with maps by Donald Pitcher. Coward McCann, 1956. \$1.95. (10-15).

In this trio of well-illustrated travel books, each concentrates on a particular area and offers highly readable material on its past, present, and future prospects. There is also good information on how the particular environment affects people's lives and work. Each book is indexed, and each offers useful supplementary material for the study of other lands. C

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(A page from The New England Primer, 1727)

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